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SUPPLIES FOR RUSSIA

THE British and Russian forces have shaken hands in Iran. We wish the evidence suggested that all possible aid was quickly being sent to the U.S.S.R. The occupation of Iran is, of course, important. It relieves the Allies of several obvious anxieties; it affords a great opportunity which we shall neglect at our peril. Now that British troops have secured south-west Iran, holding a line roughly from Mosul through Hamadan to Ahwaz, the oilfields are safe from risk of sabotage, while the Russians (acting with a vigour which certainly surprised Whitehall) have not only cleared the Tabriz area and its important air base of enemy agents but have entrenched themselves firmly throughout the whole Caspian littoral and as far east as Meshed. To these developments the outward reactions of the Turkish press and wireless have been unfavourable, but it seems more than likely that Turkey has adopted this attitude *pour décourager les autres:* she may well be a trifle sensitive when it is a question of the "right" of belligerent Powers to invade neutral territory. On reflection, the Turkish Government—enduring though its suspicions of Russia may be—will probably be reassured by the knowledge that the Axis can at least no longer kindle at Turkey's back door a potentially disturbing conflagration. Equally, General Auchinleck now knows that he can embark on major operations in North Africa without the danger of having to detach forces at an awkward moment to protect vital interests in Iran. And, if the worst were to happen in South Russia, the Allies have now an unbroken defensive line from the Caspian to the Mediterranean barring the way to the Persia Gulf and India, as well as protecting Baku.

These considerations, however, are transcended in immediate importance by the fact that a route has now been opened which permits the reasonably swift despatch to the U.S.S.R. of fighter aircraft and other munitions both from Britain and the United States. The necessity of sending such reinforcements with all speed should be the paramount objective of our strategy. In the ten weeks' campaign against Germany Russia's losses of aircraft and material both through enemy action and by wear and tear have been enormous; and the destruction of her hydro-electric supply on the Dnieper has curtailed to some extent her production of munitions. The factories of Leningrad are now isolated from Moscow; and though it is difficult to see which side is gaining ground in the medley of attacks and counter-attacks between Smolensk and the Black Sea, it is obvious that Russia's ability to hold the enemy at all points on the 1,500-mile front until winter may depend greatly on material assistance from the democracies.

It is not merely a question of Marshal Timoshenko's ability to stem a drive on Moscow: even if Leningrad ultimately falls, there seems little reason to fear, this side of winter, a Russian collapse north of Kiev. The autumn, however, gives scope for dangerous moves by Hitler further south. He may order his armies to force the lower reaches of the Dnieper at all costs and endeavour to advance to the Don. He may attempt to seize the Crimea by air-borne troops, or even to land a raiding party at Batoum by sea—with or without recourse to Turkish territorial waters. It is even possible that von Papen's journey from Ankara to Germany, following the meeting between the Führer and the Duce and a curious recrudescence of German wireless complaints that Turkish neutrality is not "complete," may be the first step towards an actual invasion of Turkey from Thrace and an effort to dominate both shores of the Black Sea. In any event the Russian Command is faced with the prospect of intense fighting for at least two months, probably longer in the South; and between now and November every fighter aircraft placed at Russia's disposal will be worth a battalion of infantry.

The delays in sending delegates to the loudly heralded conference in Moscow on inter-Allied Supply becomes increasingly inexplicable. Are we inhibited by hesitations in Washington? Are British Government circles so obsessed with the belief that Germany is invincible on land that they cannot make up their minds to run the risks of sending a large number of machines at once to the U.S.S.R.? If so, the British Government is equipped with singularly obtuse and prejudiced advisers. Without the effective aid of an undefeated Russia we can see no way of winning the war and little enough chance of holding the Middle East or preventing Turkey from throwing in her lot with the Axis. Even if the full equipment of our own Field Army has to be delayed and the expansion of the R.A.F. temporarily curtailed, aircraft and any needed fighting vehicles must at all costs be transferred forthwith to Russia. Even if this country has to tighten its belt and live this winter on half rations, ships for transportation of these supplies to the Persian Gulf must be made available without stint.

When the Bombers Come

The raiders are beginning to come over again, as Mr. Morrison and other Ministers have very properly reminded us. Yet the relief afforded us by the diversion of the Luftwaffe to the Russian front has been so great that a large part of the public has persuaded itself that everything will now be all right. We should be asking whether everything possible is being done to meet raids as devastating as those of last spring, with the possible addition of gas. The shelter position is much improved; for instance, Londoners take a better view of the new concrete types than they did of the brick street-shelters. Still there is much that could be done. A very sensible set of proposals has been sent to the government by Professor Haldane's A.R.P. Co-ordinating Committee. They suggest regional councils under the Regional Commissioners, which should enable local authorities to make collective plans to be put into execution when a raid occurred. Local authorities themselves should use Trades Councils, Church Councils, and Boy Scouts, as some have done with great success, in dealing with the homeless. Then all available accommodation near target areas should be surveyed and earmarked, with no exceptions for the well-to-do; transport should be planned so that the evacuated can get to their work. Stores of repair material should be collected and mobile labour forces organised. Rest centres should be increased, and reinforced; the school-buildings and halls used as centres have only too often been smashed; they should be made possible for habitation, since people may live in them for days. Feeding arrangements, by British restaurants, hotels, catering establishments and field kitchens should be organised beforehand. Fire fighting should be improved, by better training, water supply, and by leaving buildings accessible. Shelters should be improved; Anderson shelters need waterproofing, and in target areas such as the docks, the committee recommend the "first stage Haldane" a concrete shelter which, in second stage, can be rendered relatively safe. These constructive proposals, which are not made in a factious spirit, should receive serious consideration. Experience has taught us important lessons about the psychological problems of air raids. Even populations which have repeatedly suffered them are reluctant to prepare for them beforehand. The great majority of people bear them with extraordinary calm. But they do not, and cannot bear with calm their after-effects, homelessness, hunger, wet and cold, exhaustion and shock. Most dangerous of all to civilian moral is confusion, muddle and the feeling of neglect; and it is against these that we should be working now.

Home Notes (*By an Industrial Correspondent*)

The Royal Institute of British Architects has published a report on post-war planning. No detailed design could be expected from a body which includes practitioners of the most varied, not to say conflicting, schools of architecture. But the situation itself has dictated a surprising amount of agreement. There may be architects still who secretly share the views of one who used, at the R.I.B.A., to advocate the blocking of the London parks and river with skyscrapers, because, as he said, "Money talks!" But if they sat on this committee their views did not prevail, and are only represented in a residual fashion by the refusal to include "the detailed work of housing" in a national plan. The architects have abandoned *laissez-faire* in favour of the principle of harmony; and high time, too, seeing the dreadful mess made of Britain by *laissez-faire* and the profit-motive in building coinciding with a century's black-out of the sense of proportion. Meantime, the report advocates a national authority with regional offices, and regional groupings of local authorities for planning areas. The scope of this authority should include town-planning, roads, railways, ports, and the location of "agricultural reservations" and open spaces. Their plan should cover decentralisation of industry, design of buildings (including government buildings). organisation of railways, water supply, drainage and other utilities, It should devise new services such as area distribution of heat and hot water, salvage, and prevention of air pollution. It should reserve agricultural land, forests, parks and seashores. It should set up standards for city and village. Beyond condemning the dormitory town it is indefinite on restricting the growth of cities; and, also perhaps inevitably, on public ownership of land. Public ownership would not, of course, always mean beautiful cities. There are nearly as many Keble Gothic public buildings as private mansions in England. But this plan, if followed, would ensure suitability of building to its function, a decent standard of housing, and public amenities. For beauty of form we should, as ever, have to look to the talent of the architects, governed by a public demand which is clamant for light and convenience, but much less vocal on building design.

The new agreement between the Government and the railways goes no distance at all towards meeting the fundamental case of the critics. It is, no doubt, simpler for the Government to give the railway companies a fixed instead of a variable revenue, and therewith to assume directly the responsibility for fixing railway charges, and providing any necessary subsidies, for the duration of the war. But the fixing of the revenue, even if more reasonable in amount, would not meet the critics' point. What they—and we among them—have argued from the outset is that the railways ought to be completely taken over by the State and co-ordinated with other essential transport agencies, in order to secure the highest possible efficiency with the smallest possible expenditure of fuel, man-power, rolling stock, and other requisites. Instead, we are offered a revised financial agreement, from which the railways' interest in road transport are explicitly excluded, without any co-ordination with other transport agencies or, as far as we can see, any guarantee against huge claims for capital depreciation at the end of the war. After the last war, by the way, the Exchequer was called on to pay £150,000,000—a sum which came in very handy in keeping up railway dividends, and preventing nationalisation, during the post-war years. As for the sum of £43,000,000 now fixed as an annual payment to the companies, its real value all depends on the proposals, not so far disclosed, about payment for War Damage and on the treatment of the sums payable by the railways under the old agreement for A.R.P. On the face of the matter, the railway shareholders are not quite so well off under the new arrangement as under the old; but these two factors may make all the difference, and, in any event, the shareholders now have their money sure. To judge from reactions on the Stock Exchange, the current view is that they have done pretty well.

* * *

The most important event of the week on the industrial front has been the publication of the interim report of Sir William Beveridge's Committee on the use of skilled men in the armed forces. This embodies only a partial survey of the situation; but it raises a number of important points. The Air Force's methods of training mechanics and other skilled or semi-skilled personnel come in for special praise. Undoubtedly, the Air Force has been helped by getting recruits of a considerably higher average standard of intelligence than the Army; but, after allowance has been made for this, it does seem to have got down to the job of training its own craftsmen with a great deal of efficiency and on a thoroughly adequate scale. Its need now is not mainly for semi-skilled men—it can provide those for itself—but for additional highly skilled instructors, who cannot be trained in the short courses which are adequate for producing reasonably competent inspectors and mechanics for servicing the fighting units. This demand—for highly skilled men—is of course very difficult to meet; for industry is already very short of this kind of labour. It can be met only by further dilution, and by better economy in the use of skilled workers in the many factories which are still keeping highly trained men hanging about with too little to do. Let us hope that one effect will be to put an end to the scandal that fully trained refugees are still in many cases unable to find jobs—not because of any incapacity on their part, but simply because employers will not go to the trouble of filling up the endless forms which have to be completed before they can be set to work. Let us hope also that the need for making more economical use of highly skilled labour will at long last induce the supply departments to realise the need for compulsory measures of pooling labour and machines between firms in order to ensure their full-time use. "Capacity Exchanges" are all very well; but they do not appear to have been effective in putting an end to the scandal of men and machines being kept idle in one factory while another is held up for want of precisely the same types of machinery and labour.

* * *

The trouble with the Army, and even with the Air Force, is not that it misuses the labour of skilled engineers, but that it uses an enormous quantity of able-bodied men in doing clerical and other auxiliary jobs which women could do. The Army's answer is, apparently, that it cannot get enough women to enable it to relieve these men for other jobs. If not, why not? Are the conditions not good enough? I have never been able to see why the Army Pay Corps should consist of soldiers rather than civilians, or why a great many other jobs for the Army could not be done fully as well by ordinary civilian employees. Of course, underlying the Beveridge Committee's report, though never directly discussed in it, is the question of the size of army at which we ought to aim. The Committee recommends, *ad interim*, that the Army should have 50 per cent., the Air Force 60 per cent., and the Admiralty 50 per cent. of the additional skilled men they have

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demanded. How many these percentages mean we are naturally not told; for the size of the armed forces is a secret. But, obviously, somebody ought to be weighing very carefully the claims of the services for more men against the claims of industry. We have just been told officially that we have still more men in the services than we can effectively arm; and now the services are crying for more. Ought they to be allowed to have them, even up to 50 per cent. of the number demanded? I don't know: I haven't the means of knowing. Is there an effective body which weighs the pros and cons of a large army and a high industrial output? From what I know of the methods adopted in the past, I venture to doubt if there is.

TRANSATLANTIC

In brilliant sunshine over a calm sea watchers on the Irish coast have enjoyed one of the most splendid spectacles in our naval annals. A convoy, whose front line covered four miles of the calm seas, swept by in majestic order; round it the camouflaged destroyers circled and an occasional plane crossed its dressed ranks. How many scores of ships were there—freighters, whalers and tanks—in its dozen parallel columns? That is, for no reason I can fathom, a military secret, but one may safely say that it was even larger than the magnificent convoy which Mr. Churchill described in his last broadcast. The voyage from New York occupied some weeks, and not one incident of peril broke its monotony. In our grey hulls we carried several millions of tons of the most varied cargoes, which represented the labours, the generosity and the sympathy of the American people. On our deck there were planes and our hold was packed with food. Even the destroyer that led us was their gift. So secure were we, that our captain did not urge us to sleep in our clothes until we reached the longitude of Iceland, for up to that invisible line the patrols of the United States Navy watched over our safety.

No traveller who has passed through such an experience will minimise the contribution which America is making to ensure, first our survival and then our victory in this war. Without it we should have been overwhelmed in our isolation. Up to the occupation of Iceland, which Americans hailed with enthusiasm, it had developed steadily, by gradual stages, and most of us had argued that we might wait in confident patience; for it could be only a matter of months until America entered "the shooting war" without reservations.

My stay in the States has convinced me that this expectation is too sanguine. There was no mistaking the significance of the single vote by which the amending Act extending the period of compulsory military service scraped through the House of Representatives. This check to the President's leadership happened while I was at sea, but I had seen enough before I sailed to feel deeply anxious about the fate of this measure. The first step was the publication of an able memorandum, addressed to Congress by General Marshall, as head of the Army, who later gave evidence in person before its Committees. He asked boldly for two changes; firstly, the removal of the restriction that limits the service of conscripted men to the Western Hemisphere; secondly, the extension of their period of service from one year to the duration of the "emergency." These proposals were obviously unpopular. It was felt that the Administration was breaking faith with the men who had been drafted for one year's training only. Some units broke discipline by sending round robins of protest to Senator Wheeler. Others scattered printed protests on the roads as they marched. Sensitive to popular feeling, the President at once dropped the bolder of General Marshall's two demands. What Americans dread above all else is a second campaign in the mud of Flanders. Nor did he venture to prolong the period of service indefinitely: after hard bargaining in the lobbies the extension was limited to eighteen months. This satisfied the Senate, who passed the amending Bill by a two to one vote, but the House, rather nearer to mass opinion, was almost equally divided.

This warning does not stand alone. The broad fact is that while Americans must listen daily to eloquent and alarming official demonstrations that their safety and their liberties are in the gravest danger, they do not as yet effectively believe it. Their intellect may assent, but as yet there is no instinctive response: they cannot feel alarm, and will not yet face the sacrifices which only peril, sharply realised, could impose. That is obvious in the daily round of their economic life. Mr. Leon Henderson's attempt to curtail the use of petrol for pleasure by forbidding its sale on Sunday, actually resulted in an increase of consumption. He is still struggling, as yet with only partial success, to cut the output of motor-cars for civilian use by 50 per cent., and this in spite of the fact that it had risen during the past year by 35 per cent. There is as yet no sign of the mass emotion which fuses private interests in the flame of a nation's resolve.

The massive reluctance of the American people to enter "the shooting war" was powerfully reinforced by the attack on Russia. When the nearly incredible news came over the cables, I watched that nation lying back in its easy chair with an audible sigh of relief. Ex-President Hoover drew the moral on the very first day, when he declared that such case as there was for American belligerency had now been destroyed. The context showed clearly what he meant: Whatever Russia lacks, she has at any rate man-power in countless millions: Why, then, should America send her boys overseas? I talked over this question with every American I met, from taximen to senators. Their view was unanimous and the intellectuals hardly differed from the workers in the simplicity of their response. It was obvious that they had long been wrestling with the uncomfortable promptings of duty. They were half-persuaded that they ought to "come in," but now, in the nick of time, on the edge of the abyss, Hitler by this mad act of *hybris* had saved them; Russians would do all the necessary fighting on land; it would suffice that Americans should make the munitions. I heard this said even by experts who predicted that the Russians would collapse in a few weeks. I did, indeed, meet Americans who took the opposite view and advocated the participation of their country in an expeditionary force operating in Western Europe, but most of them were soldiers. The prevalent view among civilian experts, even among those most devoted to our common cause, was that Hitler can be destroyed by aerial bombardment alone, if we tighten the blockade and make an adroit use of political propaganda. Among the men who argued this out at length with me were several who hold positions which enable them to control the opinions of the more thoughtful strata of this democracy.

My reading of the public pulse is that America as a whole would acquiesce in any naval or aerial action which events rendered necessary. It was ready to endorse the escort of convoys. It might, I think, agree, albeit with suspicion and reluctance, to the despatch of ships and marines to Dakar, if Pétain and Hitler between them provoked it sufficiently. But I can imagine no set of circumstances, even in the distant future, that would extort its consent to a European expedition. Before that happens its mood must radically change. Is the President trying to change it? I cannot answer that question with confidence, but I will venture to say this: the nearer I got to the White House during my stay in Washington, the less confident were those I met. The President has given the most explicit public pledges, which he renewed privately to Senators to ease the passage of the Lend-Lease Act. It is, then, possible and even probable that his own belief is that America can see us through by forms of assistance that fall "short of war."

Here, then, is the problem that we have to face in our dealings with America. Can we hope to win this war, save by an expedition in the West? And if that be necessary, as it surely is, are we strong enough or can we soon be strong enough, to undertake it without American participation? At present our propagandists, official and unofficial, are using all their resources to persuade Americans that we do not need men. There would not be standing room for them on our island, as Sir Gerald Campbell put it. This may be true enough as regards the immediate present and the near future, but the unwary American reader takes it to mean that we never shall need his man-power, and I believe the intention is to convey this meaning. The consequences are obvious. If the day should come, let us say next spring, when the chances of victory depend on the arrival of a given number of American mechanised Divisions, we shall discover first of all that no such Divisions exist, and, secondly, that if they did, nothing would induce the American people to send them. The temperature of American life is still too moderate to permit of the industrial effort which might in the interval equip those Divisions, or of the political change of front that would allow of their despatch.

I will try to draw the moral as I see it. If, as I believe, we need American military aid, we must begin without delay to state the case for it, plainly and frankly. We shall have to disclose much that we have hitherto kept secret, for Americans have no patience with reticence and under-statement. It is late to begin, and I doubt whether any propagandist less popular than Mr. Churchill could succeed at this stage of the war. If, on the other hand, we shirk this doubtful effort, let us abandon all illusions: the Americans without our prompting will not spontaneously "come in." In that event it is with the Russians that we must come to terms over the eventual European campaign on two fronts. Are we doing that? I landed on these shores only a few days ago: I do not know the answer to that question.

H. N. BRAILSFORD

DUAL CAPACITY

WHEN is a Civil Servant not a Civil Servant? When, to use the phrase of the Public Accounts Committee, he is acting in a "dual capacity," and continues his association with private business even while he is acting as a servant of the State. In the present war this situation is very common: it is found not only where individual business men have entered public departments without severing their ordinary commercial or industrial connection, but also where entire private organisations have been converted into "controls" acting on behalf of the State. By way of example, the Committee on Public Accounts cites in its latest report* the Iron and Steel Control at the Ministry of Supply. The staff of the Control has actually continued to be paid by the British Iron and Steel Federation, the private monopoly of the steel-makers, and not by the Government; and, to quote the Committee, "the whole staff have now had their attention drawn to the fact that they are servants of the State, and of the Control, which is an instrument of the Ministry." There is a note of acidity in the comment made by the Committee on this curious situation. "Public Accounts Committee in recent years has had occasion more than once to refer to the relations between Government Departments and the Federation, as representing the industry, and in the circumstances your Committee was glad to receive the definite assurance that the Control is exercised by authority of the Minister."

A very similar situation is revealed in the non-ferrous metals group. Here the Committee reports "an arrangement by which the Non-Ferrous Metals Control is operated by the British Metal Corporation, who are paid a fee in respect of their staff and services rendered." The Committee goes on to say that "somewhat similar arrangements exist in the Ministry of Food, who utilise the services of a number of trade associations, both long established and specially constituted, as agents in the handling and distribution of goods." After saying that this sort of thing is "no doubt essential for the efficient working of the control system," the Committee pertinently observes that "this system raises in an acute form the problem of dual allegiance and every care should be taken to safeguard the public interest." It then adds that "the remuneration of the higher officials, indirectly paid from public funds, is likely to be greater than if they had been in the direct employment of the Ministry."

Quite so. The business men who find themselves—and have in many cases deliberately arranged to find themselves—in this dual capacity are on velvet. They are servants of the State, but they are paid more than their compeers who have entered directly into public employment. They are the Controllers, wielding the great power of the State, often over their business rivals and especially over the smaller fry of employers and traders; but they are so, often, without relinquishing even temporarily their private business connections. They may be making contracts with themselves; they may be using their power as agents of the State to make the road as smooth as possible for the resumption of their normal business activities in the future. They are "dual capacity" men, admirably placed for making the best of both worlds.

We are making no allegation of deliberate dishonesty against the men who occupy this anomalous status. No doubt the vast majority of them are behaving quite honourably according to their lights. But they are bound to have a way of looking at their trade problems from a trade point of view, and a tendency to regard as legitimate in wartime trade practices which they have been in the habit of following in time of peace, even if such practices cannot but impede the war effort.

Indeed, anyone who reads on through the rest of the Public Accounts Committee's report will see for himself how anomalous the relations between the State and certain large sectors of private business have remained even through this second year of war. On page 9 we find the British Sugar Corporation, on the strength of a single year of bad trading profit in 1938, receiving special assistance from the State to the tune of £180,000, which was meant to be recoverable in later years. On the trading results of 1939 this assistance proved to be quite unnecessary, with the result that the Corporation increased its reserve by nearly £300,000 in the year, and ended with a substantially larger reserve than it had before its resources were temporarily depleted by the bad trade of 1938.

Or consider the curious case of contracts for armour plate, where—again to quote the Committee—"the percentage added to the costs of armour to cover the risk of bulk rejection was larger than appeared justified by the actual rejections in recent years." The answer given was not to deny that the allowance was excessive, but to urge that it was reasonable "to make an allowance for the special skill required." The Committee comments that "it is not clear to them what form of special skill is involved in the manufacture of armour that is not already remunerated either in the prime costs paid for labour or in the overhead expenses paid for management."

No less startling is the statement, which occurs more than once in the course of the report, that trade associations flatly refused to accept costing methods as the basis of war contracting, or to allow their books to be officially scrutinised for the purpose of arriving at a fair price. We find, for example, that the aluminium industry "declined to accept a price clause providing for suitable facilities" for the investigation of costs and profits; and again in the case of stores contracts under the Ministry of Supply we learn that "many firms were reluctant to accept costings." In these particular instances the Government have since equipped itself with compulsory powers; but how likely are such powers to be exercised when in practice the agent of the Government is the very firm or association which have previously been resisting this scrutiny of its affairs.

It is important to be mindful that, though many improvements have been made in public contract policy since the early days of the war, the "dual capacity" system still remains in being over a very wide field. The Controllers still are, in many instances, men who have a direct interest in the industries which they are supervising on behalf of the State; the Control organisations still are quite often difficult to distinguish from the trade or industrial associations which had been building up their positions of monopoly during the inter-war years; and, even apart from the formal Controls, many other trading associations are being employed as agents of the State, especially in the distribution of foodstuffs and other essential commodities. In other instances—for example, in aircraft manufacture, the State works under agreements with the industry on terms which leave in the hands of the business interests a great deal of almost unscrutinised authority. These agreements often involve the advancing of huge capital sums for extensions and developments, sometimes without any payment of interest; and in some cases—as in the recent handing over of a big Government factory to be managed by Messrs. Beardmore, there is a positive tendency to narrow the field of public enterprise, and to hand over yet more to the great private interests.

The case advanced in support of this policy is that the capitalists and their salaried technicians and managers know how to run industry, whereas the Civil Servants do not. It would indeed be no satisfactory exchange if the State were to sack all the "dual capacity" business men and put regular Civil Servants in their places. The root trouble is not that of personnel, though it would often be better to put a skilled business man to control an industry other than his own. The root trouble is that we are still running this war on the assumption that at the end of it we are to return to profit-making enterprise on the pre-war model, and that accordingly we ought, even during the war, to keep the firms and methods of private business organisation as far as possible intact. That is why many people see no objection to high-up executives acting in a "dual capacity," or even defend this practice on the ground that it will facilitate a speedy return to pre-war conditions.

It is, however, a very grave objection to this practice that it not only strains the honesty of the "dual capacity" man, but also tends to preserve the existence of the separate businesses as units, even where it would help war output if they were grouped quite differently. The big firms are, doubtless, ready enough to agree to the "concentration," or positive elimination, of a number of small businesses; for this tends to increase their monopolistic power. They are usually most unwilling to accept any disturbance of the unity or separate identity of their own concerns—to agree, for example, to a pooling of scarce machines and skilled labour with their neighbours, where the entire contract system is based not on the capacity of a particular area, but rather on that of particular firms which may have their plants scattered over a number of widely separated districts.

The truth is that both the profit incentive and the private business structure are highly unsuitable as methods of organising war output, and that the patching which they have undergone during the past two years has done little to improve their suitability. There is no possible method of providing a real profit incentive to firms which are assured of all the orders they can possibly carry out, except by allowing them to make excessive profits; and as soon as the excess is taken away the incentive disappears with it. If the private firms are to be left in being as profit-seeking concerns, the nearest thing to an effective keeping of them up to scratch is a carefully devised costing system, accompanied by continual supervision. But the effect of this is to take many of the most competent men off the work of production, and set them to unproductive overhead operations for which they can ill be spared. If poorer quality is accepted in the supervising personnel, the system of supervision breaks down. The right course, surely, under war conditions is to take over completely the essential factories, and put the best men available to run them on a salaried basis, insisting that such men must give up their private jobs, and relying on their patriotism and their managerial consciences for getting the work done well. At any rate, that is the conclusion which a reading of this latest, as of many other, of the reports on the working of the existing hybrid system very strongly suggests. "Dual capacity" means, in nine cases out of ten, getting the worst of both worlds.

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* Report from the Committee on Public Accounts, July 30th, 1941. H.M.S.O. *6d.*

A LONDON DIARY

CATS sometimes get out of bags and honest opinions sometimes slip from the mouths of incautious statesmen. If one assumes that Mr. Jack Tanner's account of Colonel Brabazon's speech was even approximately correct, the Colonel was doing no more than artlessly revealing a state of mind that is not uncommon in certain Conservative circles. The notion that we can dominate Europe when Germany and Russia have destroyed each other is no rare delusion. We assume that Col. Moore-Brabazon cannot remain in the Government; we wish we could be quite sure that no other Members of the Cabinet, who secretly agree with him, will remain in office.

* * *

The T.U.C. attitude is clear; its leaders do not object to Communism in Russia and might not object to its spread in Eastern Europe, but they are afraid of its influence among the British working class. They see Communism as suitable to the Steppes, but they are, quite naturally, bitter enemies of the Comintern. They have very sensibly arranged for a mission to go to Moscow; they loathe Communism as a gospel. To justify themselves they ought surely to produce the alternative dynamic of British Socialism. But I see no sign of that. On the negative side, of course, they have plenty to say. They may laugh at Harry Pollitt's circular to Communist officials urging "unreserved" support for the Churchill Government now that it is in alliance with the U.S.S.R., and ask why the Communists must always over-reach themselves, declaring first this was *only* an imperialist war and now that it is *only* a people's war fought against Fascism, when, in fact, it has always been both, and remains both. They may smile when they read Harry Pollitt's speeches and his new pamphlet, *A Call for Arms*. Here is Harry back to his old and true position, which he was driven by Party discipline to recant in the autumn of 1939. He insists in the most vigorous language that in increasing production the workers are not merely helping the Soviet Union, but saving themselves and all the British people from slavery. He knows that if that is true now it has been no less true for the last two years. He must know, too, that Communist anti-war policy increased the danger that Britain would leave the U.S.S.R. to be attacked in isolation. For that reason "Occasional Londoner" seemed to me just to have missed the point when he said that Communist policy was intelligible as loyalty to our idea; my quarrel was that it was disloyalty to Socialism and its logical outcome the complete destruction of Socialist institutions everywhere, including the U.S.S.R. If you wish to read a serious book which, in my view, interprets the Marxist position in this war correctly, read Tom Wintringham's *The Politics of Victory* (Routledge, 5*s*.), which is just published. The important thing about this book is not anything it says about these past controversies, but the clear lead it gives now. And for practical purposes Pollitt and Wintringham are now again on the same side—as they always ought to have been.

* * *

This year a special International Conference on "Science and World Order" has been arranged as part of the proceedings of the British Association. For three days, September 26th to 28th, scientists of all nations are to discuss, not vaguely but in the concrete terms, how to give reality to the promises of the Eight-Point Atlantic Charter. Scientists from many countries are ready to contribute; from Britain and the Commonwealth, the U.S.A., U.S.S.R. and China; from Czechoslovakia, Norway, Holland, Belgium and France, and there should be very distinguished exiles to take part from Germany, Austria, and perhaps Italy. Since science can achieve nothing without political power, it is significant that the Ambassadors of the U.S.A., U.S.S.R. and China and the President of Czechoslovakia have all promised to preside over particular sessions. The six sessions cover the problems of organising scientific research and the relations of science and government; problems of food and nutrition and the use of those natural resources for the advantage of all that President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill have promised us; problems of planning with experts on the Five Years' Plan and the Tennessee Valley experiment to tell us how and what to avoid; problems of technical advance, the new materials available for rebuilding the world; problems of famine and disease and soil rehabilitation, which may be the most urgent group of problems at the end of the war. The last session, with H. G. Wells in the chair, deals with "Science and the World Wind." If this ambitious programme comes off—the technical difficulty of getting scientists to England at the right time from distant countries is considerable at the moment—the British Association this year should be an immense event. If I were an optimist I should say that here at last is the beginning of the job of peace-making, the realistic start of a plan to free us from fear and want.

* * *

Most interesting reports now reach me from Spain. The period of apathy is over; there is new vitality and readiness to stand up to the Fascist régime. The number of guerillas in the mountains has increased in spite of every effort to destroy them. Spanish soldiers sent to suppress them have not always been very keen on the job and some of them seem even to have fraternised. Then Falangists, who were called in instead, lost a lot of men and resorted to the most savage methods of vengeance on villagers and relatives who were supposed to have helped their men in the mountains. In spite of all this an increasing number of young people declared their intention of "going to the mountains," that is, of becoming guerillas. And then the prisons, which have always been crowded since Franco won power, are besieged by the wives and friends of the imprisoned men. Such crowds used to be dispersed brutally enough. Now, I gather, the guards and soldiers look on indifferently. There is much open anti-Franco talk—inevitably the conditions of misery and starvation unequalled even in occupied Europe. There are signs, in a word, of a return to the familiar Spain—disillusion with the tyranny, anger with greed, corruption, privilege and inefficiency and anticipation of another revolution. Soldiers and police treat those they arrest with more kindness. After all, the prisoners may soon be on top again, so what is the sense of treating them rough? A considerable body of evidence of this revived Republican Spain is now available, and one friend of mine, a cautious Spanish Liberal of long experience, suggests that the change in the last two or three months has been on a scale which might justify renewed "intervention"—this time from our side. It is certainly true that the army is much divided and that many of the higher officers bitterly dislike Suñer and the German connection. Now that Franco has openly shown his hand in a bitterly anti-British speech, while Germany has only a small body of troops available on the French frontier and a pack of trouble to deal with in France and in the other occupied countries, I can imagine no reputable reason for appeasing every anti-British and anti-progressive element in the Iberian peninsula. If invasion of occupied countries is impossible, is no type of intervention possible in Spain? The "Spanish ulcer" had almost as much to do with defeating Napoleon as the snows of the Russian steppes.

* * *

"The wheat-stubble crackled under the sun," writes a Scottish friend living in Barsetshire, "so I turned into a wood, climbed a selvage of scrub thorn and barren hazel, and reached the ridge where a cool breeze blew under beech trees. There I read for an hour, sitting against a trunk, till voices heralded the approach of two little girls, a boy, and two hound puppies. Forgetting that this was not the friendly North, where country passers-by all greet each other, I smiled at them. But the cramped South has different manners. The elder girl came up to me, her round thirteen-year-old face as expressionless as a button mushroom, and spoke with the glibness of long rehearsal. 'Are you aware that this is private property? The public footpath runs along the edge of the wood.' 'I'm sorry,' said I, 'I had no idea this was private.' That was true; if I had been trespassing, no child, dog, or keeper would have glimpsed me. At this point the puppies caused embarrassment by scenting my long-with-dog-acquainted tweeds, and hurling themselves rapturously on to my knees, whence they had to be plucked by the younger children. As I sought the path I reflected that they were due pity rather than blame. They had been taught their recitation. How could they help growing up possessive and anti-social? It would have been better for the moral character of that trio, who looked like Harrow and St. Leonards, if they had been born and brought up in Bethnal Green. The path when I reached it proved to be the right-of-way to the church, the only one which the greediest landlord cannot shut. On the side of the view it was elaborately blocked by a hedge of young trees, lest the people should see the beauty of their own countryside, and incidentally the distant great house. The whole region was recently enclosed common; I never saw so many notice-boards marked 'Private' in paths thridding the woods; even a lane hollowed by a thousand years of treading was shut with about thirty years of bramble briars. The enclosure dated from before the days of charabancs and litter-scattering swarms; it was done to keep out country people who would be helpless to protest, since all of them would be tenants or employees of the estate. It was a perfect example of landlordism in that self-conscious state which preludes decay, and which resembles only in class privilege the conscientious landholding which regarded an estate as a community. This was the sort of property acquired and sterilised by the jumped-up rich of the Edwardian era, who wanted to say in Town 'My place in Barsetshire' and in the country 'Are you aware that this is private property?'"

* * *

Some of the refugees who were sent out on the *Dunera* as prisoners of war in the panic of last summer (who were treated on the voyage out I should not say as criminals, but as no criminals should ever be treated), are now back in this country. Friends of refugees in Australia will be glad to know that their report of conditions in the camps (where there must still be over a thousand refugees) is fairly satisfactory. They hope something has been done about the cold, for their living quarters when they left were still unheated, and winter is bitterly cold in Australia—even in Victoria, where the internees are now concentrated. Otherwise they report ample food, cooked by themselves, and adequate clothing and reasonable barrack conditions. (Food parcels are not required; extra food and clothing can be bought.) There is a good programme of sports and lectures.

The chief trouble is that the internees in Victoria are subjected to prisoner-of-war regulations. This, besides other petty nuisances, entails severe restrictions on cables and air-mails. News to Germany about internees in Australia appears to be sometimes much ahead of news of their relatives living in England. Many, including political refugees, are convinced that details about their detention and whereabouts had been communicated, through the Red Cross, to the Nazi authorities; threatening letters from Germany accordingly arrived in the camps, after having passed the official censorship. Major Layton, the representative of the Home Office in Australia, does his best to clear things up, and it is entirely due to his efforts that several transports of internees from Australia have already arrived in this country. Yet some internees officially released by Home Office order are still prevented from returning if under 21 years of age, and of those who have not yet been officially released only married people and those medically unfit for internment are allowed to return with a view of their cases being reviewed. Release in Australia is apparently out of the question, and chances of emigration are slight indeed. Thus the greater number are left without any hope. Internees in Australia are severely penalised for the bad luck of having been selected, without any criterion of discrimination, for deportation to Australia at the time of the Fifth Column scare.

* * *

The Bill to destroy Glen Affric and Glen Cannich by electric-power dams comes up in Parliament on the 10th. The Government sponsor it, apparently out of devotion to the interests of private profit. Water-power is the only resource of the Highlands, and a natural monopoly. It should properly be developed by the State, gradually, to create local industries; as Scottish leaders plan. This hole-and-corner plot to ruin beautiful country and sell the birthright of a people, if it succeeds, will be a lasting disgrace of British commercialism. It only could be jockeyed through in wartime, when parliamentary democracy is largely in abeyance. But 150 M.P.s signed a motion against the Bill on its former appearance, and it may be hoped that they will vindicate their trusteeship for the nation now.

* * *

A friend who went the other day to *Love on the Dole* made the illuminating remark that after the depression of this film it was a positive relief to see the news reel that followed and to realise that at least the misery of unemployment is at an end. That particular kind of stagnant wretchedness and frustration has gone—to give place of course to another. The new kind of boredom is a change at least. The hero of *Love on the Dole* is no doubt making munitions; he probably gets £8 a week and is comfortably married. Or he may be in khaki making much less with a wife in a factory or living with children on a separation allowance. Anyway, there are compensations. Is that the moral? No, the moral is that the world of *Love on the Dole* inevitably gives way to a world of violence; frustration does not last for ever. Want, heart sickness and humiliation are followed by war or revolution, more probably both, not by accident, but causally.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of this column goes this week to Dr. E. P. Edmonds.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

Flying squads of active and bright young curates on motor-cycles, and older clergymen in runabout cars, are among innovations now being discussed by the Church of England for the post-war world.

These "flying" parsons are to cover new and extended parishes, and will form the nucleus of the new "panzer" divisions of the Church—but to heal and rebuild, not to destroy.—*Daily Mail.*

We must keep up the quota of home production, quite frankly, as an essential preparation for the next war.—Letter in *Country Life.*

Life After Death Proved. Order Here.—Poster of *Psychic News.*

ONWARD COMPARATIVELY CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS!

Onward Christian soldiers,
Armed for total war,
Crescent moon and sickle
Going on before.
Strengthening defences,
Girding for the fight,
Westward, help comes slowly,
Eastward, it is bright!

Onward, Marxist armies,
Mainly infidel,
Smite the hordes of Wotan,
Ram the gates of Hell!
Onward, hosts of Allah
On the desert sand,
Paladin of Siva
From India's coral strand!

Onward, Afric's warriors,
Marching in the van,
Polytheists fighting
As polytheists can!
Moslem, Sikh and Hindu
Bringing victory near,
Onward Christian soldiers
Bringing up the rear!

Gather, piebald legions
Of every faith or none,
For the powers of darkness
Conquer one by one.
Satan's ranks will scatter,
Wotan's swarm depart,
Chased by Christian soldiers,
Once they make a start.

SAGITTARIUS

AFRICANS IN CONCLAVE

LAST April a conference was held at Accra in the Gold Coast. It was the first meeting of its kind in the history of the colony. Paramount chiefs from the provinces, some of them illiterate, and many with no more than a smattering of western ideas and education, met together with the young African intelligentsia—men educated in Europe and America and now practising in a variety of professions on the Coast. The object of the meeting was, to quote the local papers, "to draw up long-term plans for a new and better social order for the Gold Coast people." The chiefs felt themselves unable to tackle this task themselves, so, with Government approval, they called in the young educated men—the Youth Conference—to prepare "the blue prints of a reconstructed Gold Coast Society."

"Blue prints of a reconstructed society," "plans for a new and better social order"—these phrases have a familiar ring in English ears. They seem to leap the immense gap between the England that dreams of a happier future and the Africa that, no less, aspires to a better lot when this war is over. But English "blue-prints" are over-weighted with all the complexities of our highly developed modern society. The Gold Coast blue-print, judging by the outline that emerged at the Accra meeting, will be a simpler document. What is it that the people of the Gold Coast—among the most advanced and prosperous in Africa—aspire to? What are their ambitions?

On the political side they are quite clear and definite. They ask that elected African representatives should have a clear majority in their Legislative Assembly, in place of the present majority of Government officials and nominees. They also ask that elected representatives should have a majority in the Governor's Executive Council. They propose that a House of Chiefs should be established, possessing co-ordinate legislative powers with the Legislative Assembly. On the municipal councils they would like to see a majority of African councillors, headed by African mayors. And they ask for wider opportunities for Africans in the Civil Service, the appointments to be entrusted to a Selection Board with a majority of African members.

The economic demands approved by the Conference are also clear-cut. There must no longer be reliance on one export crop, but other natural resources must be developed. Local products must be processed on the spot, and manufactures encouraged, so as to replace the crippling dependence on imported food and household articles. European-owned mines must be heavily taxed in order to contribute an increasing share of local revenues. The drain of high interest payments on foreign loans and pension payments to retired European officials must be diminished. The co-operative movement—consumers, producers and credit—must be fostered. And Government must aid local producers by subsidies, protective tariffs, and the advance of capital for the purchase of equipment and machinery.

Social services also figured largely in the discussions. All primary education must be free, and controlled by the Government, and Government should meet 60 per cent. of the expenses of approved secondary schools. Government must be responsible for the pay and pensions of all teachers. All hospitals should be under State control, and debilitating tropical diseases treated entirely free. Medical officers in the hospitals should be paid sufficiently well to make them independent of outside fees.

Here the blue-print ends. For Africans these are audacious proposals—control of their own government and Civil Service; industrialisation; free State education and health services. But to Englishmen these utopias are already as familiar as the palms of their hands. We have had control of our institutions for centuries; we have had our developed economic system for generations; and we have had fairly adequate—albeit not completely state-controlled—social services for decades, and none of our fine democratic achievement has staved off our present woes or brought us the bliss which Africans covet. But this is no reason to scorn the Africans' demands, or to pour cold water by saying "the ballot-box brought us no happiness, it will bring you none either." Our political and social progress, with all its failures, has brought within our grasp a happiness, an ease, a culture, that the African still barely dreams of. If the fulfilment of these potentialities still eludes us, it is surely due to the errors in our development, not to the fact of our development itself. There is nothing inherent in democratic control, in economic prosperity, or in widespread education and medical services, to account for the miseries of present-day Europe.

But doubts about the African "blue-print" arise on another score. Are the measures proposed sufficient to bring the wealth to the Gold Coast on which all other progress hinges? Tax the mining companies as much as you will; they are not so big or wealthy as to solve the problem. Convert the loans, cut down the pensions; some hundreds of thousands a year might be saved. Develop local industries and food production; this would be excellent, but a small country of 3,000,000 inhabitants affords too meagre a market for many types of production, and cannot prosper on self-sufficiency alone. Encourage co-operation, establish credit facilities, improve marketing; no one would argue with these exhortations. But is not the economic problem of the Gold Coast the same problem which faces all small and mainly primary-producing countries—that ultimately they cannot stand alone, and are within the power of larger and richer countries outside, who can dictate the price to be paid for purchases and the price to be received for sales? This has been the problem of all Central and Eastern Europe; it is certainly the problem of the colonial empires to-day.

This very problem was debated a few weeks ago in the House of Lords. Lord Noel Buxton drew attention to "the low prices of primary products in the Colonies," which he wished to improve "by reduction in the cost of processing or by marketing organisation or by other methods." Lord Hailey, in the debate that followed, showed a clear appreciation of the weak position of the Colonies as primary producers, but saw only two solutions—either the creation of huge economic units embracing whole continents or empires in which all activity was regulated and the Colonies assigned their place; or else an inner strengthening of the Colonies themselves, by developing industries and internal trade, and reducing their subservience to foreign capital and markets. The first solution, smacking of the German New Order, he dismissed as "too far off for us to consider at the moment," and pinned his hope on the second. This second solution—of internal colonial development—is the one adopted in the Gold Coast proposals. As an immediate practical means of alleviating colonial poverty it is the one for which all progressive elements are to-day doing battle. Lord Faringdon, in a trenchant speech (which earned no more than one sentence in the *Times* report, and not even that elsewhere) gave example after example of our shortcomings in carrying out this policy, and made many concrete and valuable suggestions. The Secretary of State, in reply, admitted—indeed stressed—the need for a strengthening of colonial economies. There can be little doubt that in future colonial production of all sorts will be aided. The plans of the Gold Coast Africans—at least on economic matters—have an excellent chance of quite speedy realisation.

But with this battle being won on behalf of the colonies, it becomes important to remember that the struggle does not end here. The Gold Coast (equally with Greece or Bulgaria or Iraq) must not be carried off its feet by ideas of "autarchy" in economics, and "sovereignty" in politics. There can be no hope for the small state which tries to stand alone in the modern world. Perhaps the solution which Lord Hailey dismissed as "too far off" is the one to which we—and the Gold Coast—should now be turning, as the next goal in our struggle; the vision of the huge economic unit in which all activity is integrated and planned. Where we will differ from the German New Order is that while the Germans wish to keep the small and weak states in their miserable position of subordination to German needs and dictation, we wish to begin by strengthening the economic and political position of our Colonies, so that they should grow in self-respect and claim a fair share of the good things to come. For the moment the struggle concentrates on this economic and political strengthening. But neither for us—nor for the Colonies—is that the end.

RITA HINDEN

VISIT TO THE DENTIST

EXPLORE with me the romance of Keble Road
On a May morning: the baker's van with its load
Of sweet-smelling, new-baked loaves drawn up
At the door, the blue-print housemaid with white cap
On her knees scrubbing the sprinkled steps.
The rain-washed pavement gleams, the sun leaps
Upon the neat and decorative garden-plots
Of wall-flowers, tulips and forget-me-nots.
Above the wall a silver birch but waves
Its plumes in the wind with feminine grace, weaves
The sunlight in and out the shifting leaves.
While I wait in the swept and polished waiting-room,
Across the lugubrious bulk of the mausoleum
Of Keble and Pusey, the men of the Oxford Movement,
A thrush in the garden flutes loud, triumphant.
Within, the white-coat dentist awaits his patient.
Enter now the room: the strong and surgical scent
Invades the senses. There is the vacant chair
Before the window-pane. With careful air
And delicate soft tread the dentist goes
About his preparations. I recognise
Among the smell of medicaments and salves
The pervasive, pungent odour of oil of cloves.
Now the broad, firm hands place in position
The head, the clever fingers of the physician
Explore the mouth and mould the gums. "The tree,"
He says, "the apple-tree, bears fruit profusely,
But the pear is sterile." The eye rests upon
Clips and needles, syringes and spittoon,
The rolls of cotton wool. All lulls the sense,
Induces apprehensive somnolence;
Hypnosis softly steals upon the brain
Absorbed in the world of sky beyond the pane
Serene, while from the region cloud there still
Approaches nearer, inexorably, the drill.

A. L. ROWSE

THE CAUCASUS WILL NOT REVOLT

(From a Correspondent)

ONE of Hitler's aims is apparently to stir up and support revolts against the Soviets in the Caucasus. To this end he has planted numerous agents in Iran who are collaborating with certain old refugee organisations with high-sounding names, whose aim is to rouse up the Caucasian peoples into revolt and overthrow the Soviet system, presumably to replace it with Hitler's form of capitalism under German control. Hitler stands about as much chance of creating revolt in the Caucasus as the old White Russians of Paris do in Moscow itself.

Tremendous changes have come over the Caucasus since the Revolution and the wars of intervention. In Tsarist days the aim of Moscow was to keep these outlying colonies in a perpetual state of internal strife. One race would be set against another so that they wasted all their energies fighting each other instead of uniting to combat Tsarist exploitation and oppression. My chauffeur in Yerivan, on a fairly recent visit to the Caucasus, explained it in this way :—

"You ask me, are things better than they were? There is no comparison. Previously there was always fighting between the Turks, the Georgians and ourselves, the Armenians. I saw my own father shot down in the street in fighting before the Revolution. You see, I am quite young, but already I have white hairs. But never mind. It is all peaceful now and our troubles are over. Never in the history of Armenia have things been so good, and they will be better yet."

The secret of Moscow's success in bringing peace to the Caucasus has been the economic development of the country in the interests of the inhabitants. Whereas formerly these forty-five different nationalities fought each other for their existence, to-day they co-operate for the common good. A few years ago an American friend of mine visited a Cossack village in the Caucasus. He asked his host, a fine old man, what sort of people lived in a village which they could see across the valley.

"Kabardino-Balkarians," replied the old man with a fierce look. "They are a wild lot of barbarians. It is more than a man's life is worth to go amongst them. Several of our men have been over there in recent years and we have never seen them again."

Doubtless the Kabardino-Balkarians told similar tales of the Cossacks. Yet to-day the people from those two villages work side by side on the same collective farm. They still carry weapons, but they never use them. They are part of their national costumes.

Azerbaidjan, with Baku for its capital, is one of the richest oil-producing regions in the world. Before the Revolution this oil was exploited by foreign interests and little of the benefits or profits went to the inhabitants. To-day the Azerbaidjan people own the oil wells and refineries themselves, running them in the interests of the whole country. Trade unions help to fix wages; they run all the social services and are largely responsible for new housing, schools, clubs, hospitals, etc., which are built out of profits from the oil.

Armenians, persecuted by one and all in the Caucasus for so many years, have been flocking back to Soviet Armenia for some years. Many new villages, especially around Yerivan, have been built to accommodate them, but so great was the influx from France, U.S.A., Iran, Turkey, Syria, etc., that it had to be controlled and stemmed until housing was available. I asked a wealthy Armenian from Paris why he had returned before conditions were more settled and less crowded.

"This is my own country," he replied, "and all the wealth and comfort in the world will not make up for living in a foreign country."

Yerivan, I was told, was being built, not rebuilt, and this was almost literally true. Much of the old city consisted of crude mud and stone huts which could hardly be called houses. Amidst these ruins fine modern blocks of flats, theatres, clubs and offices were rising that bore no relation to the former primitive hovels. The population of Yerivan was already five times what it had been in 1914.

Economic development has made enormous strides in the Caucasus. Irrigation has created vast new areas of cultivation, for much of the land is extremely fertile, but lacks sufficient water to produce crops. The Ararat Valley, formerly desert, now produces cotton in large quantities. One irrigation scheme alone, from Lake Sevan, is turning many hundreds of square miles of semi-desert into rich, green farmland. From the air, when flying from Yerivan to Tiflis, I could see the effects of irrigation very clearly. On the dry, yellow-brown earth below were many patches and lines of green, interlaced with channels of water, where crops were growing, and these were spreading rapidly, year by year, like a green rash.

Around Batum, a place of heavy rainfall, the opposite was taking place. Dangerous swamps have been drained and are now covered with groves of citrus fruits. Upon the hill sides we drove for miles through endless tea plantations where a few years before had been only a tangle of sub-tropical forest. At various strategical points were large modern tea factories surrounded by beautiful gardens.

The effect of all this development on the people can well be imagined. They are working for themselves, reaping the benefits from their toil, and they see life becoming better each year. They are not ruled by Moscow as in former days. Each of the nationalities has autonomy. The larger ones, such as Georgia, Azerbaidjan and Armenia, are full Soviet Republics, others form autonomous regions and smaller divisions.

Collectivisation was introduced slowly and carefully. These strongly individualistic people could not be forced together rapidly. But gradually, as a few collective farms got under way, those outside them saw how much better off were their friends inside the "kolkhoses," how quickly they were able to build better houses, eat more and better food, work more easily with machinery and good animals. Collectivisation "took on" rapidly, so that to-day there can be few peasants who still work individually.

Education was introduced at once after the Revolution, in the native languages, and with it went a great movement for the fostering and revival of native culture. Culture and language had been largely suppressed in Tsarist days and education was so scanty as to leave at least 90 per cent. of the Caucasian people illiterate. To-day this is all changed; every village has its new school. Technical schools and colleges are to be found in all the larger towns; Tiflis has a whole new University Centre with accommodation for thousands of students. Both young and old have been learning in recent years. I spoke to Armenian boys and girls in a park in Yerivan who were doing homework in the quiet study corner. They were writing in Armenian, and told me they were learning Russian as their first foreign language. In many places I saw elderly people studiously reading and writing, sitting on their doorsteps or on benches in the parks. The native theatre, dancing, singing and art are highly developed and completely unfettered. Theatre and other groups travel all over Russia giving performances of the highest standard; I saw them myself in Moscow and other places.

The Georgian Military Highway, which runs from the North Caucasus to Tiflis, over the mountains, used to be like the Khyber Pass in India. Caravans and travellers were constantly beset with robbers and bandits. Fierce bands of armed peasants would swoop down from the walled and fortified villages on the mountainsides, murdering and looting. To-day, and for some years past, all this has changed. I drove over this highway in perfect safety, neither the chauffeur, myself nor the other passengers having any defensive weapons with us. Yet we passed the same wild looking hillmen—Hefsurians in shaggy fur hats and sheepskin coats, Ingushians, superbly mounted and often gaily clad, Ossetians, Georgians, Balkarians—often bristling with weapons which they never used. I saw a small band of these hill people wander into Tiflis, gazing spellbound at the gleaming new buildings, the fine wide streets lined with flower-beds, the traffic and the modern dress of the people. They derived enormous amusement from trying ice-cream for the first time in their lives.

Even the Jews are happy in the Caucasus. One old man showed me round his synagogue in Tiflis, and there were tears of emotion in his eyes as he told me :—

"Here in the Caucasus is heaven on earth at last for the Jews. In Tsarist days everyone was against us. We were stoned in the streets and dared not retaliate. But now we are as free as anyone else and are not molested. We are free to worship as we like and our only complaint is that our synagogue is too small for all the people who come to it."

In the Street of the Silversmiths in Tiflis there were still a few individual shops left. In one of them an elderly man was busy making small daggers. His shop bristled with all manner of fierce and terrible looking weapons. I asked him how business was.

"It is terrible," he replied, "no one ever uses these things now except theatre people."

If he has not already been absorbed into an artel or munition factory he may be experiencing a sudden revival in business, supplying the local home guard.

Hitler and the would-be revolutionaries will have to work very hard to persuade all these Caucasian peoples that they will be better off under anything but Soviet rule.

IN DEFENCE OF THE USELESS

AS I approached a taxi outside Victoria Station on Monday morning, a tall man, almost as badly dressed as myself, rushed up to the door, opened it, and waved me in. Though I did not want him or anybody else to open the door for me, I gave him a small token of my esteem and went inside. As the taxi moved off, I remembered getting into a taxi with Roger Casement many years ago, and his dogged refusal to give a tip to a youth who had opened the door for us. It was not that he minded parting with money; he was one of the most generous men of his time; how generous may be guessed from the fact that one day, during a motor-tour, after he had called at a small Ulster farmhouse for a glass of milk and learned that the widow who owned the farm had lost her only cow, he stopped at the next town, where a fair was being held, bought a cow and sent it back to her. Yet even a man of such princely impulses drew the line at paying for unnecessary services of the door-opening kind. If the youth had frankly asked him for money, he would almost certainly have given it. But to pretend that opening a door was a service worth paying for was an imposture not to be encouraged. Strange how the wells of charity suddenly run dry even in the most charitable. There is a good example of this at the beginning of the *Sentimental Journey*.

Even if door-opening for gain is an imposition on the public, I confess I have not the moral courage to refuse a tip to anybody who looks as if he expected one. And after all, if beggars are impostors as they open doors, what about all those veterans in gold braid who stand outside hotels and restaurants and show one unnecessarily into taxis which are already at the door? One may be alone and without so much luggage as a gas-mask, yet the formality of being shown into the taxi has to be gone through, and he would be a brave man who refused to invest sixpence in the purchase of a commissionaire's smile. Outside theatres on rainy nights the commissionaires do perform a useful service by fetching taxis to the door, but on the whole the commissionaire is merely an ornamental beggar. In a world stripped of pretence, he would appear, not in gold braid, but in tattered garments and a green old hat that had known better days.

At the same time civilisation would lose something if useless attentions were banished from human society. The man who gets up to open the door for a woman is usually performing as superfluous an action as the commissionaire who expects sixpence as an admission fee to a taxi-cab. Chivalry may have had a utilitarian origin, but to-day it is merely a decorative convention. I do no injury to any woman who happens to be present if I sit in a room with a hat on my head, and yet, if I keep my hat on, the woman will feel injured. In the street I must uselessly remove my hat if I meet a woman I know. I must allow her to enter a door or a gate first even when it would make things easier for both of us if I went in ahead. This is all as irrational as opening the doors of taxis for strong men in the pink of condition. Nature, however, though it may abhor a vacuum, obviously loves the superfluous. At least, human nature does.

Consider how many million superfluous words are written every year in letters. The ordinary letter begins with the usually superfluous "dear" and ends with the often superfluous and misleading "Yours sincerely" or "Yours faithfully." There are devotees of the correct use of language who object to this: they maintain that to call anyone "dear" who is not dear to you is to tell a lie and that to write "yours sincerely" at the end of a letter is as often as not a piece of hypocrisy. I know some people who refuse to have anything to do with such formalism in their correspondence. It seems to me, however, to be a good thing to have a universal formula for beginning and ending a letter—a formula which looks polite, does not mean what it says, and leaves it to your correspondent to guess for himself whether you care twopence about him. We cannot afford to be honest to the last letter in our correspondence. If we were, there are men who, on opening their letters in the morning, would find themselves addressed as "Loathsome Mr. This," "Horrible Mr. That," or "Boring Mr. T'other." This would not make for smoothness of social intercourse. It is better to pretend that everybody is dear.

Another example of the part played by the superfluous in social life is the universal use of the question "How do you do?" It is a particularly silly question in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred because the last thing in the world the ordinary person who asks it wants to know is how you do do. If a woman to whom you were introduced at a party asked you "How do you do?" and you gave her an honest answer, she would be astonished. "Well," you might tell her, "I have a bronchial cough that seems to get worse in the mornings because of this wartime tobacco. I feel a bit puffed when I go up hills, and one of my little toes goes numb every now and then. I had a touch of sciatica the other day, but I cured it with a raw potato. My liver's fairish, but it would probably be better if I took more exercise." There are a few women, perhaps, who might respond eagerly to such a catalogue of ailments. But most women, I fancy, would shrink from a fellow-guest who did not know how to answer a plain question, not by answering it, but by asking the question over again. Hence, men and women go about the world asking each other how they do with as little desire to be answered as jesting Pilate. For all the sense there is in the question, they might as well ask: "Why is a mouse when it spins?" "How do you do?" indeed, has now lost all meaning except as a password into the domain of courtesy.

Let us, however, continue to use words on occasion without regard to their strict meaning. Parliament would seem a strange place if some Thersites M.P. were allowed to rise and refer to "the ignoble lord" or "the dishonourable member." We all know that in the past there have been lords who were ignoble and members who were dishonourable; but convention decrees that every lord is noble and every member honourable, and without obedience to convention the world would be a bear-garden. Polite adjectives, however meaningless, may be regarded as a necessary ingredient in the production of a civilised society. It is a safe rule never to omit the polite adjective when convention calls for it.

Petitions, for example, should always be "humble." There is no more reason for this than for signing yourself: "Your humble and obedient servant," but men in authority seem to like the pretence of humility. A few years ago a judge in the Chancery Division became furious because a petition about an estate had been presented to him with no mention of the Uriah Heep adjective. "For hundreds of years," he thundered, "petitions have been presented to this court, but this is the first I have seen without the word 'humble.' It is either a mistake, ignorance or impudence." That may seem severe, but after all the judge was only calling for the *mot juste*.

One of the superfluous words that I should like to see kept in circulation is the word "sir." It sounds so polite. There are people who regard it as undemocratic, but any undemocratic taint that it has is due to the frequent use of it not as a term of politeness, but as a term of subservience. Let its use become universal—let the peer use it in speaking to the agricultural labourer as well as the agricultural labourer in speaking to the peer—and it will bring ease instead of gaucherie into a great deal of conversation. I never use the word myself, but I have long admired it as one of the gracious words in the English vocabulary.

Let us, then, praise useless things—useless words, useless customs, useless nearly everything else. One of the most charming features of a well-laid dinner-table is the presence of so many useless things on it. People who never use a spoon when eating pudding are careful to have a spoon laid alongside the fork. People who have no intention of making use of a knife when eating fish nevertheless have the silver fish-knife laid in its proper place. The reason why the world goes on manufacturing pudding-spoons and fish-knives when it would obviously be easy to get on without them, can be explained only by the general passion for the superfluous. The fork, unknown a few centuries ago, now lords it at the table; but the knife and spoon that it has to so great an extent displaced survive as gloriously useless decorations. Even the sugar-tongs is a survival rather than an essential in a world of comparatively clean hands.

As for useless customs, there is one that in spite of my liking for inutility, I should be glad to see done away with. This is the custom that sends people hurrying to help one on with one's overcoat. It is easy enough to see why attendants in cloakrooms indulge in this unnecessary practice; they are, like the commissionaires outside, making a living out of doing unnecessary things. But even in private houses men—and sometimes women—make it extremely difficult to get into one's coat by overburdening one with help. Often they turn what is one of the easiest actions in life into a struggle. Compared with them, the men who open the doors of taxis are angels of considerateness. If the door-openers do not help, at least they do not hinder. And that in this world is something—well worth a small reward.

Y. Y.

SICKERT AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY

The committee and organising secretary are to be congratulated on having produced an exhibition which would have been good at any time and to-day is extraordinary. To have collected a hundred and twenty works by our greatest living artist, to be shown in London in these days, argues perseverance and tact on the part of the borrowers and on that of the lenders courage and public spirit; let us remember to be grateful. What one misses most are large portraits; also the Camden Town period is inadequately represented; but there is much to be thankful for. It is a pity that such a good show should not be better seen. The combination of sunlight, diffused light and artificial light provides doubtless the most unfavourable illumination official ingenuity could devise. And, during the two hours I spent in the gallery, many of the pictures, especially some in Room XXXVI, were invisible almost.

Though in happier circumstances it would, and let us hope will, be possible to make a better show—a show in which there will be more first-rate painting and no rubbish at all—yet to satisfy those who will or must attempt an estimate of Sickert's art here is enough. Here one gets some notion of the nature and size of the master's talent and of the place he may be expected to take in the history of painting. Lord Methuen in a preface to the catalogue (price fourpence) favours the public with ideas of his own. "From the first a great lover of the French Impressionists, Mr. Sickert has done much by his painting to allow us in this country to appreciate that school." It would be difficult to say anything sillier. The appreciation of the Impressionists—the most accessible of painters—no more needs help from Sickert than Sickert needs help from Lord Methuen. Even in this country they have been admired on their own merits these forty years. Manet, Renoir, Monet, Pissarro and Sisley were known to the more alert critics, amateurs and dealers—to Dr. McColl and to Konody, the translator of Mauclair, to Mr. Reid, to the directors of the Grosvenor Gallery and the New—when Sickert was still struggling to escape the spell of Whistler and had lately thrown off the discipline of Legros. It was through these critics, amateurs and dealers, and through Mauclair especially, that they became known to the British public.

Moreover—and this is much more interesting—it is easy to overestimate the influence of Impressionism on the art of Sickert. To Degas he owes more than to anyone but himself. But can Degas properly be called an impressionist? Himself he denied that he was anything of the sort; and Théodore Duret, the best authority on the subject, declines to include him amongst his Impressionist Painters. Degas never affected the impressionist technique, those famous *petites taches*, nor did he subscribe to the pleinairiste doctrine. In 1877 he formally dissociated himself from the group. Also, though Sickert's debt to Degas is considerable, it is easy to overrate that too. From the French master he picked up a liking for what were called "modern subjects"—common and sometimes squalid scenes from the private lives of unimportant people. But the vision was different; and whereas with Degas the satirical propensity became a passion at times, with Sickert it was never much more than a fashion. For all his jocose and slightly tiresome titles, there is no effective comment on life in his pictures; he treated his subjects, a little literary nonsense notwithstanding, simply as motives. Degas is more intellectual; and a smart journalist, with no understanding of the art, could extract from his work a biting criticism of humanity; from Sickert he could get no more than a pinch of Arnold Bennett. And doubtless he, Sickert, was at his best when, lost to all nonsense, he became completely absorbed in the play of light on a shabby house in Dieppe or in a shabbier London music-hall. The long picture of *The New Bedford* is, I suspect, the best thing in the show.

Sickert's paint is his own: it has nothing, or very little, to do with Impressionism proper. Nearest to him are Bonnard and Vuillard; and between the three there can be no question of influence. His drawing and design were doubtless affected by Degas who, in his turn, had been influenced by Ingres and the Japanese. Yet even here it is necessary to modify sweeping claims, and to distinguish: for Sickert always draws—and how beautifully he can draw on occasions—like a painter—that is, in masses; whereas Degas—till near the end of his life at all events—was a little circumscribed in his use of paint by his respect for the calligraphic line, the line of Monsieur Ingres. Sickert is a colourist above all things. And it is here that he comes into the English tradition. I know not what Englishman, unless it be Constable, has painted better. Look at *The Mantelpiece* (No. 6), *The Haunted House* (87), *The Nude* (4), *Lady in a Gondola* (7) or *Resting* (44), look at almost any of the Dieppe pictures, and you will believe me. Here are no clashes of striking and brilliant tones; but here are harmonies. It is all a question of relations and quantities, which is not saying much; but which is all there is to say. The matter, every atom of it, may appear dingy; the relations are exquisite; the whole is a joy. Only you must peer into the picture to extract the delight: these are not easy but subtle pleasures.

I have called Sickert a colourist in the English tradition; yet the only British ancestor I should venture to claim for him would be Hogarth. Also there is a French flavour in all he does: but in what good painting of the last hundred years is there not? When that grand and genuinely international exhibition comes to be held, as sooner or later let us hope it will be, that exhibition in which are to be neither dates nor patriotic labels, nor any of those scraps of irrelevant information in which we all delight and which mislead us all, I rather doubt whether Sickert's neighbours will be either English or French. More easily can I picture a panel of his works hanging between a Canaletto and a Guardi in a room, or series of rooms, dominated by Tintoret. It seems to me there is something Venetian about his art which has nothing to do—need I say?—with the fact that he often took S. Marco for model. Maybe it comes of his love for the enchanting and enchanted city, of saturation in its air, and manifests itself in a Venetian approach to the subject, purely painterlike, a beautifully sensuous touch, technical adroitness, unobtrusive and, it must be admitted, unimpressive humour, and an eschewing of intellectual problems.

When that day comes, when the grand exhibition of European painting is open, when my fortunate successors are able to see Sickert in his place, not as an exciting contemporary nor yet as a grand old man, but as a European painter like another, I do not think they will call him a great artist. He lacks, at least so it seems to me, the invention, the scope and, above all the intensity of the giants. But assuredly they will call him a good artist, and a very good painter. Also they will salute him as "serious": for I cannot suppose that any of those unlucky transcriptions of Victorian Illustrators, too many of which disfigure this exhibition, will be admitted. If an eminent artist chooses to play the fool, by all means let him; but let not critics and amateurs make fools of themselves by taking the fun seriously. These transcripts are so ridiculously feeble that one would never guess that they were all from the hand of the master. That is another question my successors will have the pleasure of discussing.

Clive Bell

THE MOVIES

"Reluctant Dragon," at the Gaumont

Another full-length Disney, this time behind the scenes. *Reluctant Dragon* is in effect publicity for Walt Disney Inc., and we are taken round the studios to see how everything is done. You remember the operatic hen of an early cartoon? Here is the lady who produces those remarkable jewel-songs of the farmyard; the orchestra strikes up, the singer walks on, and instead of singing she clucks. Donald Duck's voice also appears in the flesh, and this is only the beginning of a tour which lets us into the secret of all those wonderful sound effects, half-musical and half-animal, which fit Disney's creations so much better than does the Pastoral Symphony. A huffing and puffing little engine, of the sort we have enjoyed in countless cartoons, is shown here on a studio screen to its full accompaniment of jazz instruments, mooing machines, drum rattles, shower baths, small orchestra, tumbling pyramids of cans, etc.—the whole fascinating bag of tricks. Disney, of course, is a master of showmanship, and he makes this behind-the-scenes tour of his factory brilliantly amusing by introducing Mr. Robert Benchley as the uneasy visitor who is being shown round. Benchley, in fact, for long my favourite film star, rather steals the picture from the cartoons which appear from time to time. It is a joy to see him peeping into the window of the art class, trying to lose himself in corridors, more flustered than delighted by the multiple processes in which he finds himself involved. The cartoons themselves include a delightful clash between railway engine and steam barge; a very good Goofy (How to Ride a Horse); a new human character, Baby Weems, shown to us only in stills and amusing in idea but dull to look at; the trailer of a forthcoming Donald Duck; and the chief and final piece, *The Dragon.* This turns out to be a debunking of fairy-tales, with a very greenery-yellery dragon who prefers verses at tea-parties to combat with the local dragon-slayer. It's funny at times, but the flutey English voices of both dragon and knight would probably seem funnier to American audiences. There is, by, the way, no serious side to *Reluctant Dragon* and perhaps it's all the better for that.

William Whitebait

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Squaring the Circle," at the Vaudeville

Katayev was a roaring success in Moscow in 1928 and crowded Russian theatres afterwards for many years. It has now become a period piece which satirises a phase of Communist thought and of life in Moscow. Two bachelor comrades get along well enough, sharing one dirty room, a cushion and a volume of Karl Marx serving each as a pillow on alternate nights. When both, without informing the other, yield to bourgeois prejudice, register as husbands, and bring their wives to the same room, comedy and catastrophe are equally certain. When we discover at the end of the first act that one of the husbands is an old flame of the other husband's wife, the plot of the play and the certainty that they will exchange wives are already discernible. Structurally this is the play's chief weakness; there is plenty of fun but no surprise after the end of Act I.

Exactly what an English audience will make of such a play we are not quite sure. They will readily accept the four chief characters as representative types. The half-baked intellectual who always wishes to know whether an action is ethical or unethical, and whose endless discussion of dialectical points is only interrupted by his constant desire for sausage, is a character who belongs to immemorial Russia. His prototypes are in Chehov. His room mate is the keen young Communist worker who marries the sort of silly girl who will survive in any country, revolution or no revolution. The last of the quartet is an earnest, practical young woman who believes most emphatically in "labour equality" between men and women, in the responsibility of Russian youth for the future of revolution, and in dialectical materialism as the sufficient instrument for the solution of all problems, including that of marriage. This part is played with marked success and sensitivity; for the rest the acting is no more than lively and competent. English audiences will be pleased to find that Russians could rag themselves even in 1928. But a situation which everyone in Moscow would appreciate, would appear to most people in Britain as merely bizarre.

"The Cherry Orchard," at the New

A visit to the New Theatre revives—how subtly and deliciously—the old Russia. Landowners are drifting away, their estates are being sold up and divided, for the first time (in a new translation by Hubert Butler) the words "bungalow" and "allotment" appear in the dialogue, pointing the future of the cherry orchard. As a picture of a vanished society—But that is not at all how the play strikes; there is no object-lesson, there's not even the parable hinted at by Mr. Tyrone Guthrie in his programme note. First and last, Chehov's play deals with human beings, people so individual that we seem always to catch them at those off-moments which are most revealing. They come and go on the stage, sympathetic and self-absorbed, making a lovely criss-cross of action; the whole play, in a sense, is a picture of coming and going. Their oddities, once so incredibly Russian, seem now to be our own; and it is a mark of Chehov's genius that *The Cherry Orchard* can be enjoyed by Russian audiences as wild farce, while English interpretation prefers sentimental comedy. Mr. Guthrie's production misses very few chances, though a little more liveliness of scenery would be an advantage. The acting provides some perfect performances—O. B. Clarence's old Firs, James Dale's Lopahin and Rosalind Atkinson's Varya, Stanford Holme's buffy neighbour, for example—and is there any other play outside Shakespeare's that gives actors such varied opportunities? Athene Sayler, as Mme. Ranevska, plumps for dignity and charm in full sail. There are comic elements in the character which she passes over, but it is impossible not to be delighted by her skill.

THE COMING WEEK

Saturday, September 6th—
  Royal Philharmonic Concert, Albert Hall, 2.30.
  Concert of Soviet Chamber Music, Suffolk Galleries, Suffolk Street, S.W.1, 5.30.
Sunday, September 7th—
  Anglo-Soviet Friendship Week, Cambridge. Particulars from Mrs. H. F. Stewart, Girton Gate, Cambridge.
Tuesday, September 9th—
  W. D. Hogarth: "The Work of the London Council of Social Service," Housing Centre, 1.
  First of Five Public Lectures by Sir Bernard Pares: "Russia To-day," Morley College, 7.

WEDNESDAY, September 18th—
Opening of P.E.N. Club Book Exhibition by Desmond MacCarthy, French Institute, Queensberry Place, S.W.7, 5.30.

FRIDAY, September 12th—
Maxwell Fry: "Modern Architecture," 22 St. Petersburgh Place, W.2, 7.

Correspondence

WARTIME SOCIAL SURVEY

SIR,—In the summer of 1940 misgivings were widely expressed in the press and in Parliament about an organisation called Wartime Social Survey, formed in the spring of 1940 and attached to the Ministry of Information. These misgivings were due partly to misapprehension of the purpose of the Survey, partly to lack of knowledge of the accuracy and objectivity of results obtained by the methods employed, partly to jealousy by press and Members of Parliament of what seemed to them an usurpation of their own functions, and partly (one may suppose) to recurrent suspicion of the Ministry. In replying to a debate on the subject on August 1st, 1940, the Minister of Information stated:—

> We . . . set up, under the auspices of the National Institute of Social and Economic Research, a body to which the name was given of Wartime Social Survey. We set it up under the auspices of that body in order that it should be independent of the Ministry. It was appointed not by us, but by a distinguished professor of the University of London.
>
> The staff were, in fact, selected on the advice of a strong group of specialists.

Questioned again on the subject on June 18th last, the Minister said:—

> This matter was fully discussed a year ago in the House. . . . It was explained to the House and, I think, met with general approval.

In September, 1940, the National Institute of Economic and Social Research withdrew its support on the ground that the Survey had by then moved over into a field in which it could no longer assume responsibility. The work, however, continued under the same staff and by the same methods; to that degree, therefore, Mr. Duff Cooper's assurances in Parliament still held good. During the following ten months the Survey made a number of reports for various Ministries on such subjects as sleeping conditions in heavily raided areas, difficulties in buying food, habits and opinions relevant to the planning of community feeding and to the tobacco shortage, the shortage of working clothes, shopping habits, and a number of similar topics on which detailed information is evidently needed in deciding policy.

In April last the then Director of Home Intelligence, who had built up the Survey, resigned. In June the Survey was placed under the direction of a former official of the British Institute of Public Opinion, a body whose methods, purpose and standing are quite different from those of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research; and changes were proposed in the organisation of the Survey which, in the opinion of the staff and interviewers, removed the safeguards which they felt necessary for the independence and objectivity of their work. In the circumstances, all but two of a staff of twenty-four have resigned, left, or refused reappointment.

Three things are clear: *firstly*, that whatever the rights or wrongs of the disagreements which have led to these resignations, the assurances given by the Minister to Parliament last year no longer hold; *secondly*, that some time must elapse before a reconstituted staff and qualified new interviewers can be expected to be functioning; and *thirdly*, that there is at present no guarantee to the "user" departments, to local authorities, or to the public that future reports will have the same standard of accuracy and objectivity as they have had in the past. The conclusion one would draw from the whole unfortunate story is that, if work of this character is to continue (and it seems most desirable that it should), it will best be situated in a more suitable environment than that of the Ministry of Information. Its object is, or should be, altogether different from propaganda, publicity or exhortation; its purpose solely to provide objective information to departments as to habits, reactions, etc., on which social policy can be based. The obvious place for a reconstituted Wartime Social Survey, since a report may be called for by any department, is under some central body such as the Cabinet Secretariat.

A. V. HILL

HOW TO WIN THE WAR

SIR,—If I send a comment on Colonel Clive Garsia's review of my book *Total Victory*, it is both to thank you for the generous amount of space you have given it and also to suggest that in one vital respect Colonel Garsia has misunderstood my theme.

It is only because the title of his review "How to win?" is, after all, *the* question of the day that I venture to ask for space in which to remove the misunderstanding.

Colonel Garsia says of my plan: "The appeal is thus primarily to reason, and this is where the author leads himself astray. He overlooks the fact that the Germany of to-day will only accept defeat when life becomes sufficiently intolerable as to make the alternative offered seem less attractive. There will be no awakened idealism about it." I agree entirely with Colonel Garsia, and I do not think he will find any reference in my book to "awakening idealism in Germany."

The root of any difference between Colonel Garsia and myself lies in our conception of the meaning of the word intolerable.

I claim that when the Germans have been convinced that (*a*) they cannot beat us, (*b*) we can continue to make life damned uncomfortable for them and progressively so; there will be trouble in Germany if we offer the German people proposals which, whilst utterly unacceptable to the Nazis, are not unreasonable to non-Nazis.

My view about this war, and I held it and circulated it in 1936, when I believed the war was already in being, is that the Nazis cannot win without occupying London, but we need not occupy Berlin to beat them. Your reviewer will agree that if we interpret "intolerable" as meaning armed occupation of Germany, the acceptance of defeat by the enemy is still an act of reason.

In this war, as in all wars, the day-to-day complexities of the business delude people into confusing the ends and the means. The object of war is simply to make the enemy change his mind to our way of thinking, and our total war strategy must be based on psychological and military operations directed towards this object, and *none other*. Furthermore, it is useless to plan operations which are beyond the capacity of our political and material resources.

In conclusion, your reviewer remarks that I "envisage a Germany which, having shed Hitlerism, could then be trusted to enter a system of European co-operation with good faith." This is the exact opposite to what I propose, *vide* my plans for an overwhelmingly strong Anglo-American peace force.

STEPHEN KING-HALL

House of Commons, S.W.1.

THE EIGHT POINTS

SIR,—Although the Churchill-Roosevelt declaration is in many ways historic and important, it reveals a confusion of thought. From clauses 1-7 the declaration envisages a world in which, after the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny, all peoples are striving together and on equal terms towards political and economic security. But from clause 8 a very different position is implied. Apparently even after the final destruction of Nazi tyranny there are going to be nations which threaten or may threaten aggression, and, opposed to them, there are going to be peace-loving peoples. The one are to be relieved altogether of the crushing burden of armaments, while the peace-loving peoples are merely to have the burden lightened. How is the line of demarcation to be drawn? When and how does a nation which threatens or may threaten aggression cease to become such a nation? Is it realised that such a nation, deprived of the necessity of making armaments, will enjoy a tremendous economic advantage?

Surely the whole of clause 8 betrays a complete misunderstanding of the problem which will face the world after the war. The war effort of Britain and Russia should be directed towards producing a revolution inside Germany. Only by this means can the Nazi tyranny be finally destroyed. Such a revolution, if it is to be effective, will require to be equipped with British and American arms. Are these arms to be taken away after the war? Are the soldiers of the revolution to be disbanded and told they are members of a defeated nation? Furthermore, such a revolution must be given a cause worth fighting for. Can anyone who knows the history of Germany over the last 20 years imagine that a movement which promised the German people complete unilateral disarmament for an indefinite period would gain many adherents? But if a German were to arise, who could faithfully promise his countrymen that if they followed him they would bring the German people not to defeat and shame, but to freedom, strength and a peaceful collaboration with other nations on equal terms, would not a large proportion of the nation, tired of years of fruitless sacrifice and strain, be inspired with a new hope and rally to his cause?

One looks forward to the day when Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin will produce a declaration in which they recognise that this is not a war between nations, but a world civil war between those who desire peace by collaboration between men of all nations on equal terms, and those who desire the rule of savage and imperialistic violence.

Bournemouth. CIVIS MUNDI

SIR,—During the recent meeting in the Atlantic between Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill eight points of Peace Aims were drawn up and broadcast to the world. Most of the points were constructive even if rather vague, but a part of the programme called for the disarmament, unilaterally, of the aggressor powers, presumably as a precondition before the fruits of the brave new world could be enjoyed. Since this historic meeting I read that negotiations are proceeding between the U.S.A. and one of the aggressor powers, Japan. Does this mean that the disarmament clause is not to be taken seriously, or is there some definition of the word "aggressor" which I have missed? Perhaps Mr. D. N. Pritt could oblige with an explanation, as I feel that it is beyond the powers of a mere layman.

Of course, if Japan has agreed to scuttle her navy and to withdraw from China the whole thing becomes clear, but I am still worried about the position of Russia, who was branded as an aggressor in the little matter of Finland. Are we committed to disarm Russia after she has won the war for us? If so, it seems a bit hard on both of us.

I. WAVENEY GIRVAN

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL HOSPITALS

SIR,—The suggestion made by Mr. Ritchie Calder in your issue of August 16th, that the two great hospital systems of London are indulging in a form of low-grade guerilla warfare and that the L.C.C. hospitals have been unfairly treated by voluntary hospitals, cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged.

Little is to be gained by this undignified process of "mud slinging," but Mr. Calder has made certain provocative statements about the voluntary hospitals in their dealings with the L.C.C. that demand an equally outspoken answer.

(1) The suggestion that the E.M.S., even as a wartime measure, is unsatisfactory will only carry weight if supported by the production of an alternative and better plan. None is forthcoming from Mr. Calder at present, apparently.

(2) That all the sectors are run by the voluntary hospitals is a just cause for complaint. It would have been interesting if a proportion, say half, of the sectors had been placed under L.C.C. jurisdiction.

(3) That many nominees of the voluntary hospitals have been converted to a realisation of the necessity for a co-ordinated state medical service is undoubtedly true; but that they have been impressed by the municipal hospital system in its present form is open to the gravest doubts.

(4) There is need for more, rather than less, propaganda on "limelight stealing" from both hospital systems, to educate the public to make full use of the services at its disposal.

(5) In this war we need efficiency, not heroism.

(6) As far as the distribution of casualties between the L.C.C. and voluntary hospitals is concerned, it should be mentioned that the Ambulance Service is controlled by the Municipal Authority who, in the person of the Borough Medical Officer of Health instructs the ambulance drivers where to deliver the casualties. The system of distributing the cases in any area demands urgent revision, to prevent the

swamping of one hospital with casualties while others only a short distance away remain idle.

(7) As far as "passing the buck" to the L.C.C. hospitals in respect of the civilian sick is concerned, the statement that the voluntary hospitals have exploited to the full the statutory obligation of the L.C.C. to accept needful cases is not supported by a survey of the only figures to which I have access at the moment. Of a random sample of 52,718 patients seen in a voluntary hospital in one year only 134, or about 0.0027 per cent., were transferred. The group of cases known as the "chronic civilian sick" presents a difficult problem. Nobody wants these cases, if only the truth be told. From the medical point of view they are relatively uninteresting. Why don't the voluntary hospitals want them? Because most of the voluntary hospitals are teaching hospitals, and the teaching value of these cases is limited; no useful purpose would be served by blocking beds for many months with cases of this type, and thereby reducing further the number, already dangerously small, of cases with which each student has personal contact during his clinical training.

The voluntary hospitals are not asking a favour of the L.C.C. hospitals when they apply for the transfer of these cases to a municipal hospital. As Mr. Calder has stated, it is their statutory obligation, based upon the fact that the rate-payers give the L.C.C. vast sums of money every year for this very purpose, for the care of these cases; and the wretched rate-payer continues to pay.

(8) Voluntary and municipal doctors can, and do, work harmoniously together in some hospitals, but would that it were always so. There has been friction. In the majority of cases it can be explained by the fact that the voluntary hospital doctors are meeting for the first time the system that makes one man responsible for every patient in "his" hospital, that sanctions a petty dictatorship permitting the superintendent to transfer to his wards, to treat, any case that takes his fancy, without so much as a word to the Assistant Medical Officer who has been attending the case previously.

The story does not end here. Mr. Calder has omitted to mention two points which he is morally bound to consider, since he has raised the suggestion of conflict between the voluntary and municipal hospitals.

(1) The burden of by far the greater portion of the out-patient services is borne by the voluntary hospitals. Mr Calder mentions the 193,000 out-patients handled in a total of 97 L.C.C. hospitals in a year; an average of about 2,000 patients per hospital per year. At a single voluntary hospital in one year 108,297 new patients were treated in the out-patient departments.

(2) Let it be remembered that the voluntary hospitals continue to bear the responsibility of educating the future members of the medical profession. The almost super-human task of maintaining the integrity of the medical schools and the continuity of medical education despite the diffusion of staff and patients in sector hospitals, scattered over a wide area, has been surmounted. The L.C.C. hospital staffs can congratulate themselves upon having been spared the burden of this thankless task.

That the whole medical service of the country needs drastic reorganisation, and that to deal successfully with many of the problems involved it will have to be revolutionary, evolution having offered so far no cause for encouragement, is a fact that has to be faced with good grace. But that the voluntary hospitals represent the evil genius of obstruction, and foster a Machiavellian delight in baulking the L.C.C. in the pursuit of its progressive aspirations, in "poisoning its rabbits and stealing its plums," is a piece of nonsense which fortunately exists only in Mr. Calder's fertile imagination.

Voluntary Hospital Surgeon

THE VILLAGE EGG

Sir,—I should like to answer Mr. Anthony West's letter in your issue of August 30th, but I hardly know how to set about it. I endeavoured to record faithfully facts coming within my observation in the village in which I live, and, as accurately as possible, without claiming verbal exactitude, conversations in which I took part. Mr. West says that my article, "The Village Egg" is "characterised by complete divorce from reality." In more colloquial and less cumbrous English, it is a pack of lies. But, if this were so, how could he possibly know? I did not mention the name of my village—I think it most unlikely that he would know where to look for it if he heard it—and my article was only initialled; so he could hardly identify me with enough certainty to investigate my reputation for veracity.

Why Mr. West is so in love with the egg scheme, dissatisfaction with which is, on his own showing, "usual," is no concern of mine. But the heat of his letter suggests to me that he is a prejudiced person. The antitheses to his abuse of country dwellers, in his concluding paragraph, was expressed recently by a farmer talking to an approving audience in our nearest market town, where hundreds of good hens, some of them actually laying, were waiting to be turned into "boiling fowls." "The trouble in this country," he said, "is that everybody is so jealous of anybody who has something he has not. The townspeople are jealous of us because we have eggs. So they bleat to the Food Controller, and he takes them away." The bribe of 4*d.* a dozen, at the taxpayers' expense, did not seem to have softened his heart. There is much more wrong with the egg scheme than a foolish tiff between town and country. But I may, perhaps remind Mr. West that, in the matter of food, town dwellers enjoy many advantages denied to country dwellers.

Briefly to refer to a few other points in Mr. West's letter; the distinction between a crime and a misdemeanour—irrelevant to this discussion—is too technical and subtle for our agricultural folk. It is not nonsense to say that the Government encouraged poultry keeping and, later, changed their minds. For years they encouraged it actively, and I am fairly certain that a special branch of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries was formed for the purpose. Unfortunately, through lack of foresight in respect of the provision of feeding stuffs, the stocks of poultry that had been built up could not be turned to advantage just when they could have been most useful. Lastly, what the country wants most just now is not a mechanism, but eggs.

Morys Gascoyne

END OF ECONOMIC PARENTHOOD

Sir,—The notion that "co-operative rivalry in the public services" rather than "economic acquisitiveness" will encourage fertility among those who now refuse it, appears to me to be based on a failure to recognise factors which, even more than financial insecurity, have been responsible for the failure of western man to perpetuate himself.

You can readily depress a birth-rate by birth-control propaganda, but the average man—and woman—will always be impervious to exhortations to a higher average of fertility than that warranted by personal feeling. It is notorious that it is precisely among those who enjoy a settled income—the prosperous classes—that the small or non-existent family now prevails. For them modern social conditions too often entail an income margin too narrow to permit a reasonably sized family. But there is no evidence to show that larger income groups are more prolific.

The only permanent incentive to a civilised community to reproduce itself (and that entails an average of between three and four children per family) would seem to be an innate regard for, and delight in, family life. Socialistic planning may do something to provide the background for such an attitude of mind. But it can do nothing to create it. We have got, somehow, to revitalise and re-spiritualise human personality before we can place any reliance on *world* government and *world* planning to fill the empty cradles.

Geoffrey Whitworth

DR. PEATE

Sir,—May I crave a little of your space to place before your readers the case of Dr. Iorwerth Peate? Dr. Peate, besides being one of Wales' distinguished poets, is also the Keeper of the Department of Folk Culture and Industries at the National Museum of Wales. On July the 24th of this year, Dr. Peate was registered unconditionally as a Conscientious Objector. The very next day a meeting of the Council of the Welsh National Museum was held and a resolution was passed asking an Emergency Committee to review Dr. Peate's case. This was done, and on August 11th Dr. Peate was relieved of his position as a Keeper in the Museum.

Apart from the principle underlying this case, Dr. Peate's particular treatment may not be of great import to your English readers, but it happens that he is the creator of a department at the Welsh Museum which has attracted visitors from all parts of Europe, and which is its only basis to the claim to be the *National* Museum of Wales. He is also the only Welsh-speaking Keeper at the Museum and Wales feels rightly indignant that she should be deprived of the services of one of her most talented sons.

As the Museum is a State endowed institution, it is pertinent to enquire how long it will be allowed to flout the laws enacted by the state which endows it, and which grants exemption to objectors to military service when they have satisfied the state-appointed tribunal of the validity of their objection?

Fairwater, Aneirin ap Talfan,
Ty Croes, Editor of *Heddiw*,
Ammanford. (Welsh Literary Monthly).

THE C.O.S.

Sir,—In your issue for August 22nd, Critic, in a note on Mr. Rowntree's new book, *Poverty*, refers to Mr. Rowntree's work in 1899 as follows:—

> By dividing up the causes of poverty he helped to remove discussion from the Charity Organisation level; poverty was not a single phenomenon due to the inherent criminality of the lower orders.

The Charity Organisation Society has never been so foolish as to think either that "the lower orders" are "inherently criminal" or that there is only one cause of poverty. May I quote from Sir Charles Loch, the greatest exponent of the point of view of the C.O.S. in "*How to Help in Cases of Distress*" first published in 1886. "Economically, everyone in the indigent class represents a deficit . . . which the rigour of competition, the undue or injurious diversion of profits to unproductive expenditure and the unfitness of the labourer for more skilled work, combine to create. . . . Out of intermittent labour spring our greatest woes. . . . Charity, in fact, is often a voluntary and insufficient and wasteful self-imposed tax on the part of the rich to compensate for these deficits. . . . By combination rather than by charity the conditions of labour are to be improved. In general charity in these matters will but do mischief."

In 1941, the C.O.S. is as far from believing in the "inherent criminality of the lower orders" as it was in 1899.

B. E. Astbury

Charity Organisation Society.

THE SUPPLY OF DOCTORS

Sir,—The letter from "A Specialist's Wife" asserting that British doctors are out of work, and that therefore posts should not be offered to refugee doctors, surprises me. As a member of the Bristol Education Committee, I have been gravely concerned at our failures to replace doctors and dentists, called up for military service from our School Medical Service. I have been officially informed that it is impossible to find British doctors and dentists to make good our losses. I was finally more or less challenged to find some refugee doctors. I succeeded in finding a number of refugee applicants and their qualifications will be submitted to the next meeting of our School Medical Services Sub-Committee. Is the explanation that there is a dearth of doctors and dentists for ordinary work and a surfeit of specialists, or is it that the salary, £500, rising by £50 to £700 a year, which was offered, is not sufficiently high to make it worth while for British doctors to apply? Meanwhile, whatever the explanation, our children are in danger of steady deterioration in the medical and dental care which they receive.

R. St. John Reade

3 Oakland Road, Bristol.

THIS WAR'S SLANG

Sir,—May I be allowed, in the cause of accuracy, to point out a few errors which have slipped into the Report of Competition No. 601?

FLAK is the German abbreviation of *Flieger*-abwehrkanone, not Flug.

BOMBENLOS requires no diaresis on the second O, which would, of course, change the merry word Bolona into something much less merry.

ORGANISE in the slang sense of acquiring illicitly is by no means a new R.A.F. invention, but has been current in the German form "organisieren" with exactly the same sense for many years. This fact is an interesting and perhaps important revelation of the German conception of organisation with which it is as well that we should be familiar in this country!

Stanley Godman

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

SINCE the newspapers have been full of Iran, my memory has been full of Persia. Fars, from which the word Persia is derived, may be only one province in the Shah's kingdom, but it was injudicious of his majesty to wish the English name changed. To our ears Iran is a word without weight, a *parvenu* word easily confounded with the new-fangled name for Mesopotamia. But Persia is a word charged with the most august associations, consecrated by Herodotus and Horace, Chaucer, the Bible, Marlowe and Milton, a vast panorama of a word in which we see Darius and Belshazzar, Cyrus and Artaxerxes, Seleucids and Sasanians, Hafiz and Shah Abbas—immutable justice, terrifying might, inordinate luxury, and the most exquisite refinement. From veneration for its history I continue therefore to call "Persia" this country which I regard with a particular affection, because I spent there the three happiest months of my life. It is over fifteen years since from the air above the Caspian I saw the Elburz mountains dwindle into a pencil-line upon the horizon. But the nobility of the landscape, the picturesqueness of the cities and the amenity of the climate combined with the company of singularly congenial friends to leave in my memory a unique and still vivid impression of delight.

This week, encouraged by the good news of our prudent action in Persia, I have been refreshing my recollections by rereading some of the excellent books written by travellers to Persia. The supreme masterpiece concerned with Persia in English literature is indisputably the free version made of the Rubaiyat by Fitzgerald. Over-familiarity with this poem, which I believe to be more popular with the unbookish than any other poem in English, too often blinds us to its wonderful felicity. Omar Khayyám is considered by his countrymen a secondary writer, and if Fitzgerald had been to Persia, he might have been tempted to make equally genial renderings of Sadi, Hafiz and Jani. Except for this translation, the best work in English concerned with Persia is James Morier's *Hajji Baba*. Although easily procurable in the Everyman and World's Classics editions, this is not so well known as it should be, and I recommend it as one of the most amusing nineteenth-century books. Born in 1780, the son of a British Consul at Constantinople, Morier went first to Persia in 1808, with a British Mission intended to counteract Napoleon's attempt at winning the Shah's support. He was there off and on for the next seven years, at one time acting as *chargé d'affaires*. He wrote accounts of his travels, followed in 1824 by his fascinating novel. *Hajji Baba* purports to be the translation of an autobiography: avowedly basing himself on *Gil Blas*, Morier used a picaresque form akin to that of certain of the *Arabian Nights*. This enabled him to draw upon the whole range of his Persian experiences; and it is only after reading the book that one perceives how skilfully he has managed to introduce descriptions of the variegated customs prevailing at Meshed and at Kum, among the Yezidis and the Kurds, the Armenians and the Turcomans. Bagdad, Constantinople and the representatives in Tehran of the rival European nations are also convincingly described as they strike the Persian eye. Entranced by the liveliness of the narrative the reader does not notice how packed it is with information. But it must be remembered that the book is a satire: it represents the Persians as almost without exception dishonest, mendacious, cowardly, conceited, ostentatious, cruel and fanatical. Though grossly unfair, the author remains good-humoured, and one feels that his moral disapproval is qualified by natural sympathy. Persia is a medley of races, and there is little in common between the virile tribesmen or nomads and the urbane citizens of Isfahan and Shiraz. It is, moreover, not easy for a European to become intimate with the modern Persian, who has had imposed on him the xenophobia that accompanies resurgent nationalism. The distrust naturally excited by the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907 has never subsided; and while the British exploitation of the oilfields has brought not only prosperity to the Persian budget but great medical and educational benefits to the local population, the conduct of the Russians under the Soviets no less than under the Czars has been most deleterious to the Persian economy. In any case Oriental peoples intent upon learning from Europe are quicker to imitate our vices than our virtues. The deplorable results are described in *The Road to Oxiana* by Robert Byron, a brilliant and truculent writer whose death by enemy action is a loss to English letters.

To understand the signal merits of the Persian character, one should read William Browne's *A Year in Persia*. In this very engaging book the Persian is revealed as the most generous of hosts, the most affectionate of parents, a lover of fun and wit, and a devotee of poetry with a deep love of natural beauty.

Despite the excellent accounts of Persia by Curzon, Sykes and Arnold Wilson, many readers still imagine a land exuberant with peach trees and roses, and nightingales ceaseless above fountains in the moonlight of a perpetual summer—such is the power of poets and painters to create illusions. In fact, Persia, which is more than twelve times the size of England, consists principally of desert, in which the cities occupy small oases. Most of the country is a plateau, some three to six thousand feet above sea level, cold and often snow-bound in winter, while in summer the days are torrid, the nights agreeably cool. The national passion for gardens comes largely from their rarity and the short duration of their flowering. The plateau is broken by great mountain ranges, so that to cross Persia one must surmount a series of arid plains surrounded with peaks and divided one from another by difficult passes. The distances between the cities are very great, and some of the traveller's happiest memories are likely to be of nights spent on the road in remote villages, where the headman provides for sleeping a whitewashed room empty save for carpets, and where a chicken, killed in honour of his arrival, is cooked for him in pomegranate juice. Tea is the national drink, but the wine of Shiraz, forbidden in principle to the Moslem, is worthy of the verses it has inspired. Early in the morning one sets out again upon the interminable road; a tall whirlwind of sand races like a djinn across the arid soil, mirages far more plausible than anyone who has not seen them would credit bring non-existent reed-bordered lakes to within a stone's throw of the road and fill the distance with mountains of a Leonardesque blue. The real mountains are equally beautiful and more strange, for they seem built of colossal petrified animals piled peak-high and mottled with lurid colours. The travellers' tales in the *Arabian Nights* cannot seem extravagant to anyone who has travelled by road from Khanikin to Tehran, and from Tehran to Shiraz. But for the absence of any but illusory water these landscapes would be the loveliest, as they are the most impressive, that I have known. One becomes aware of the immensity of Asia and the physical insignificance of the rare human beings assembled in its occasional crannies. Then by the wayside at the top of a pass one sees little piles of stones, and on the fawn horizon a smudge of green and white marks the location of Isfahan. (The Persian traveller at the first sight of his impatiently awaited goal assembles a few stones as an ancient token of thankfulness.) The overwhelming majesty of the solitudes that one has traversed sharpens one's delight in the verdure of palace-gardens, the complicated polychrome of the tiles on city-gate and mosque, the swarming hubbub of the arcaded bazaars. The Persian cities are less picturesque than those of Morocco, because the clothes are drab—and they have become drabber, because European, since I was there—but to compensate there is architecture incomparably nobler than anything in Fez or Marrakesh, and while the Moors have detestable taste, the Persians retain something of their ancient craftsmanship so that the commonest pots are of extraordinary excellence. The only writer who has done anything like justice to the visual beauty of Persia is Miss Sackville-West in *Passenger to Teheran*.

The traveller who deplores the introduction into Oriental countries of European customs is often attacked as a sentimentalist. Possibly it is sentimental to deplore anything that appears inevitable—in which case every moralist and every aesthete is a sentimentalist. For my part I feel as fully justified when I complain about the compulsory adoption of European clothes by the Turks and Persians as when I protest against a proposal for destroying Carlton House Terrace or Waterloo Bridge. Rulers like Ataturk and Reza have supposed that the independence of their country depended upon imitating Occidental technique, a use of power symbolised equally by the machine-gun and the bowler hat. I believe this to be a delusion. The natural resources of Turkey and Persia are not such that these nations can become industrialised like Great Britain or Germany, and their independence must therefore continue to be dependent upon the Great Powers or upon some future League or Federation. They are therefore sacrificing the bone for the shadow, the dignity of their traditions for a jerry-built "civilisation" that lacks validity. We in Europe have become miserably aware of what we have sacrificed for industrialism, and even those most confident that on balance happiness has increased, feel appalled at the excessive urbanisation, the disappearance of craftsmanship, the degradation of moral and aesthetic standards. Our best poetry and fiction have become one incessant moan: how blithe, by comparison, is the general impression made by the *Arabian Nights*, which, despite the decline of Islamic civilisation remain a generally faithful account of its daily life. One must avoid being deluded by the picturesque, one must not admire the plumage and forget the dying bird. Corruption, grinding poverty, the lack of liberty and any recourse against injustice—all three, though they have been much reduced in Morocco, are part and parcel of the immemorial East. But, in my most superficial experience of Islamic lands, the common life of Isfahan and Fez seemed happier, save in one respect, than the life of Glasgow, Dusseldorf or St. Etienne. (The exception is important: after some while in Asia or Africa, I have always found insufferable the spectacle of unnecessary corporal ills, of blindness in particular. The provision of public medical services would be otherwise profitable than the introduction of our irrational and mean costume.) The Persian climate, moreover, is such as would render industrial life intolerable. I wish that the traditional fabric could be maintained because I suspect that the harmony visible where European influences are inconspicuous is more than superficial; that the potter in Shiraz and the tobacconist in Kum enjoys a more harmonious life than the factory-worker in Manchester or, *a fortiori*, in Calcutta; and that a main reason for the nostalgic memories left by travel in undeveloped countries is the sense of a society in which human beings still combine spontaneity with dignity.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

LENIN TURNS THE KEY

To the Finland Station. By EDMUND WILSON. *Secker and Warburg.* 18s.

The mystery of Mr. Wilson's title is explained by the fact that on April 16th, 1917, Lenin arrived from Germany in Petrograd at the Finland Station, and made a speech which was to inaugurate the final stage in the Bolshevik revolution, sedulously prepared by him in the mole-like activities of his long exile. The book begins with Giovanni Battista Vico and his discovery by the young French professor, Jules Michelet, in January, 1824. There has been a movement in the affairs of man, according to Mr. Wilson, from Vico through Michelet, Renan, Taine and Anatole France, and again through Babeuf, Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen, Marx and Engels, to Lenin and to the Finland Station. His object in this volume is to trace for us the curve of this movement on the chart of human history.

It is a curious book. The discovery of Vico—and it was a discovery in 1725—was the fact that "the social world" is not a perpetual miracle or act of God, but "is certainly the work of man." And Michelet said: "I had no other master but Vico. His principle of living force, of humanity creating itself, made both my book and my teaching." It is this movement of history creating itself and of humanity creating itself which Mr. Wilson sees in the curve from Vico to Lenin and culminating at the Finland Station. It is not a steady or even unbroken movement; it runs into a blind alley in Renan, Taine and Anatole France, and leaves earth for the clouds in Saint-Simon, Fourier and Owen. But Michelet felt it and tried to live history in the past; Marx seized the lever in his master-hands and turned the current irresistibly in the right direction; while Lenin—to change the metaphor—as his train drew up at the Finland Station,

> with a remnant of Vico's God still disguised in the Dialectic, but with no fear of Roman Pope or Protestant Synod, not so sure of the controls of society as the engineer was of the engine that was taking him to Petrograd, yet in a position to calculate the chances with closer accuracy than a hundred to one, stood on the eve of the moment when for the first time in the human exploit the key of a philosophy of history was to fit an historical lock.

This thesis around which the book is written is an interesting one and, when Mr. Wilson has finished his exposition and has landed you at the Finland Station with Lenin and his bowler hat, you feel that he has done something to prove it, that he has got hold of an important historical fact or principle, and has widened your knowledge of past, present and future events. What makes the book so curious is that, despite this, the more one reads it the less interested one is in this central and important thesis, and at the same time the book becomes more and more interesting. The reason is that Mr. Wilson has another side which overwhelms or eclipses his talents of a philosopher of history. The picture of Lenin in a bowler hat, carrying a great bouquet of roses, fascinates him even more than the curve on the chart of history which connected what he was saying to the sailors drawn up on the platform with what the prophet Giovanni Battista Vico had written 200 years before. The man, Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, fascinates him even more than Lenin, the anonymous historical force or manipulator of historical forces. The man Marx and his tragic psychology are to him more real than, and just as important as, the historical force which wrote *Das Kapital* and which we euphemistically call Karl Marx much in the same way as the ancient Hebrews called the terrifying Jehovah Adonai. In other words Mr Wilson is a psychologist and artist as well as a philosopher of history, and the artistry of his psychological analysis is so great that he forgets and makes us forget history. The things which one remembers in this book are not the thesis, but the portraits of men, the subtle and brilliant analysis and psychological reconstruction of Michelet, Renan, Taine, Lassalle, Engels, Trotsky, but, above all, of Marx and Lenin. And though the book suffers in consequence from a certain dislocation or disorientation, Mr. Wilson has this justification, that he nearly always—and in a remarkable way in the case of Marx—shows how the man's personal psychology was related to his work, and therefore helps one to understand the work and to distinguish what is eternal in it from what is fortuitous as one has perhaps never understood it before. LEONARD WOOLF

CHRISTIAN REVIVAL

The Church, Impotent or Triumphant? By SIDNEY DARK. *Gollancz.* 3s. 6d.

Challenge to the Churches. By JOHN MACMURRAY. *Kegan Paul.* 1s.

"I am aware that I am in disagreement with much left-wing opinion, when I express the conviction that there is an intimate relation between the banishing of God from the French schools in 1904 and the disaster of 1940, the decay of faith leading to corruption, disagreement and confusion." There may be some left-wing opinion which will dispute this remark in Mr. Sidney Dark's cogent and militant book, since there are thoughtless people on the Left as there are on the Right. Of course, the collapse of France in 1940 is the result of loss of faith. All societies collapse and dissolve into their component parts when the unifying cement has crumbled. But the prohibition of religious teaching in 1904 was the symptom that the faith had crumbled, not the cause of the crumbling. To understand how this had happened we should have to go back to the social and economic changes that led to the Renaissance and the Reformation, when the authority of Christianity as a universal religion was challenged by a new outlook which found expression in national and secular religions. In the eighteenth century France was divided more sharply than any other country into the devotees of two types of faith. There were those who hoped to maintain the ancient religion of Catholicism, which after the Revolution turned backwards to reorganise itself on an even more authoritarian and anti-democratic basis. The new religion of Progress had taken firm hold in the more informed half of France. Progress was a religion in the most precise sense. It included an explanation of the Universe and allotted man his place in an ultimate scheme of development; it substituted happiness in this world for eternal bliss or torment in the next; it rested on a belief that man was born rational and could construct his own destiny, instead of accepting the dogma that he was born in sin and owed his salvation to Divine intervention and to the guidance of the Church. It substituted the instrument of knowledge for that of clerical or biblical authority, and it made liberty and equality and universal brotherhood, which are implicit in Christian teaching, into the accepted basis of social aspiration. The assumption that we are moving on through the help of Science and the increased use of reason to a social millennium was the real religion of most educated persons in Western Europe in the nineteenth century. If this religion could have been maintained in France, as those who abolished Catholic education hoped, then France would not have disintegrated when attacked by a third religion, which was a throw-back to something earlier than Christianity, a revived barbarism which denied the moral values common both to the religion of progress and to Christianity. To trace this failure of both the Christian and the democratic faiths would take me too far afield. We need only notice that men discovered with a shock, that is reflected in all literature after 1920, that Science was not leading them automatically to Utopia, and that those who had benefited by the property system could not stand the test, when it became clear that the proper use of knowledge demanded a new economic structure and that the ethics of democracy, as of Christianity, demanded that liberty and equality should be given a universal instead of a class significance.

In some degree the same crumbling of faith both in Christianity and progress occurred all over Western Europe. The new barbarism triumphed most quickly in Germany, both because Germany suffered a greater moral and physical shock after the war than occurred in the victorious states and because there was in Germany a stronger racial and primitive tradition to which the Dictator could appeal than existed in the more rational and progressive democracies. But the need for a social faith and reinterpretation of the religion of progress was clearly understood by the more far-sighted thinkers in this country as it was in France. Bernard Shaw, for instance, who had been a powerful influence in disintegrating the faith of the nineteenth century, began *Back to Methuselah* after the last war with a declaration that we must find a new religion. Shaw's religion was that of Creative Evolution, the doctrine that progress is possible for man, but that it depends, not on the automatic accumulation of wealth and inevitable mastery of nature, but on the individual's capacity deliberately to create new social forms and even new types of human being. Imagination, said Mr. Shaw in effect, must be our guide. We cannot trust only to the scientific rationalism of the 18th century. This, I think, has been the creed of most Socialists and Communists, though Communists have added that religion must have not only a social objective but an historical and dynamic theory and an organised church.

On the failure of the Christian Churches to abide by the values which they proclaimed, Mr. Sidney Dark is refreshingly outspoken. He does full justice to the signs of conscience in the Church, to the Malvern Conference, to the social lead given by the Archbishop of York and the enlightened pronouncements of the thoughtful school of Christian Socialists. He begins, rightly, with a discussion and denunciation of the Church's abdication of its functions when it failed to see in the Spanish war a decisive test of its sincerity. He quotes admirably statements on the Spanish issue by those priests and bishops who remained faithful to Christianity after Franco's rebellion and he says that "the people who claim Franco as a Christian hero have a conception of Christianity so fundamentally different from mine that the alliance of my Church with theirs now seems to be as undesirable as happily it is improbable." He is equally clear about the unchristian attitude of churchmen like Dean Inge. "He is continually emphasising that he belongs to the class that lives in comfortable and refined sufficiency, and he makes no secret of his frank dislike of the vulgar and the poor, who in a reasonable society would be kept in their place. Dr. Inge would cordially have disliked St. Peter and have been horrified at St. Francis." Sidney Dark, who, as Editor of the *Church Times*, was for many years the robust, if more cautious, champion of a liberal and applied Christianity, knows too much about the Church to be very sanguine that it can meet the needs of our day. He says that it must altogether lose its hold on its remaining followers if it continues to act merely as a support of privilege. He grasps at the signs of social thinking in the Church as a hope that through such revival Europe may be saved from the moral collapse that has

THE BLIND MAN'S HOUSE

by HUGH WALPOLE

Sir Hugh Walpole had completed and corrected the proofs of this novel a few months before his death. *The Blind Man's House* forms a fitting climax to his long and brilliant career as one of the foremost narrative artists of our time. Here Sir Hugh shows with sensitive understanding the undercurrents of a blind man's emotional life, his love, his jealousies, and the strange twists of human character which play beneath the social surface of a small English town. This novel has been written from the heart. It will always occupy a memorable place in the long canon of this great writer's work. 8/6

NEVER MIND, MR. LOM

by ALFRED LOMNITZ

Mr. Lom was a German artist; he is now naturalised. A year ago the police came to his lodgings and in the great "round-up" of aliens he was taken to an internment camp in England. This book, illustrated by the author, tells of his experiences there. Shining through it there is a philosophy, bred of quality of character and mind, that makes a tremendous appeal in these troubled times. 7/6

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opened the gates to Hitler. He is insistent that Christianity must mean Socialism if it is to live. He fails, I think, to understand that even if the Church could cast off its structural alliance with property and privilege, it is also hampered by a doctrinal basis which is unacceptable to the majority of educated men. The battle is no longer simply between Christianity and progress, because the Church has compromised in order to survive, and those who believe in progress are themselves sceptical of their own faith; but to pick holes in Darwin and to understand the implications of Freud will not make the thinking man again believe in the doctrine of Atonement. The Church has gained a new tolerance and respect from its enemies in so far as it has stood for human values in the fight against Fascism; it has gained a new reputation for hypocrisy and worse in so far as it has allied itself with Franco and Hitler. It gains ground with those who despair of secular religion and who want escape from the new war of religion which is now turning Europe into a shambles. But while it is harnessed to doctrines which its leaders themselves can only repeat as long as they accompany their repetitions with volumes of explanation and with inward reservations, it cannot act as the dynamic which socialists like Mr. Dark are seeking.

This fact is very clearly understood by Professor MacMurray, a Christian, whose thought goes beyond that of Mr. Dark, but who agrees with him about the necessity of Christianity with a social content. He says quite baldly and precisely that "Through the whole development of science from Capurnicus to Freud, the Christian Churches have been identified with the losing battle against science in defence of medieval beliefs." The weakness of Mr. MacMurray's thoughtful little essay is that he gives us no hint in his conclusion, how Christianity is to become again, as he says it must be, a creative religion. It must, he says, disentangle itself from its status as a bulwark of the old order; it must free itself from doctrines in which intelligent man cannot believe, and it must stand, as Jesus stood, for the oppressed against the oppressors. "It must express in its ritual a refusal of hieratical privilege and authority and a faith in common humanity." He does not show us how such steps are conceivable in any of the Churches we now know. Mr. MacMurray's plea appears to me a plea for a new religion rather than for a revived Christianity.

That Socialism is the natural inheritor of the seat of authority left vacant by the abdication of the Church and the decline of the religion of automatic progress is as apparent to me as to Mr. Dark and Mr. MacMurray. That if it is to be a religion—and I agree with both these thinkers that to conquer it must have the dynamic of a religion—it must be an expression of the moral values of humanity as well as its material needs is also clear. Mr. MacMurray expounds this thesis with clarity and originality. If democracy is to survive, he says, it must be through religion, that is, through the desire of people for a communal life, in contrast to their belief that social improvement can be achieved, through the mechanism of the State. In this matter Mr. MacMurray is particularly interesting when he discusses both the benefits and the defects of Communism in Russia. The conclusion from both of these books would seem to me to be the necessity for a spiritual revival of the Socialist movement, which would concentrate not only on the battle for power over the State machine, but also on the growth in every district and region of an active, organised group, seeking to build on a communal basis a life which has become shattered and made dangerously dependent upon the State machine. Economic totalitarianism may be inevitable. It may, however, still be an instrument of social democracy.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

ON THE ICE

Kabloona. By GONTRAN DE PONCINS. Introductions by ERIC LINKLATER. *Cape.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

A year before the war the Vicomte de Poncins left Paris for the Arctic on a one-man expedition to the Eskimos. He also went to look for the meaning of life, it being a delusion of people who live in temperate climates that life is reduced to its significant essentials in the extreme ones where one is either boiled alive or frozen stiff. What exactly the Vicomte did discover about life I am not at all sure, and I don't believe it can be important. His adventures among the Eskimos, his observations of them and his record of his own reactions as a traveller are another matter. Here is something fresh, serious, unconventional and thoroughly well done. If one does not put his book at the exciting level of Peter Freuchen's astonishing book on the Eskimos published some seven years ago, one does recognise in the Vicomte a traveller of real curiosity and temperament.

If one eliminates the scrappily inhabited parts of Northern Asia, there are three regions where the Eskimos may be studied: in Greenland, where the Eskimo is domesticated; in Alaska, where he is a branch of the American tourist industry, and in the islands of the Canadian Arctic, where he is often totally beyond contact with the white man. It is relatively simple to reach even the remote fur trading posts of the northern coast of Canada: the Vicomte flew there with a Roman Catholic bishop who had the Arctic for his diocese. But the islands are far more difficult. A traveller who simply turns up on that coast, as the Vicomte did, has to depend on rare boats, which hug the shores, on their crawling circuitous journeys or to wait for the winter to freeze the seas and make sled-driving possible. The winter, strange as it seems to our ears, is the longed-for season. The blustering, nerve-racking autumnal storms with their miserable chilliness, give place to the majestic frosts, travelling is at last possible, hunting is good, food abundant. To be encased in ice brings back, apparently, the joy of life. The sea is the Eskimo's land. There he builds his igloo, for the ice is warmer than the land, or, rather, the water under the ice is warmer than the earth under the snow. There his sled rides more easily over the ice than over the hummocky soil of the snow-covered earth. The ice is, so to speak, his cornfield and his pasture.

The freezing of the seas is an extraordinary spectacle:

> The sea does not freeze solid in a single night. Day after day I watched it and I saw how, helped by the shifting winds, the grainy-surfaced mirror would crack and break, the waters would flow free, and then the struggle would begin again. Something more powerful than the demonic power of the sea was vanquishing its impetuousness, curbing its restless spirit. Little by little it was forced to yield, and the waves flung by it against the already frozen shore would stop in mid-air, defeated, crystallised. One morning there was left only a small pool of water in the bay, of a green so dark that it was almost black. Out of it popped a seal and then another seal. Next day this pool, too, was gone, and there remained only the different shades of green and grey and white to attest the phases of the struggle. I saw the Eskimos move cautiously out from shore saw them strike the ice smartly with their heels to test its strength and saw them cross the pack to mark the arrival of the greatest of seasons.

For a civilised man the adjustments required by living among the Eskimos were enormous. At first the Frenchman could not rid himself of the egoism of the European; he was infuriated by what at first seemed to be the inefficiency, the thieving, the lying, the squalor of his hosts, appalled by their dulled and monotonous lack of individuality. His first journey over the featureless tundra, with an Eskimo and his wife and child, was depressing. The couple slogged on in step, the toe of the woman touching the heel of the man, as if they were one animal, or some new kind of communal automaton. Here was the group with a vengeance and in all its blank, herd-like stupor. Experience—and the Vicomte stayed among the Eskimos for 15 months—altered these impressions; vices changed into virtues when he had ceased drastically to impose his own standards and to relate what he found to the character of the people. One soon gets accustomed to dirt. The ghastly habit of devouring frozen seal and fish raw, the dispiriting habit of having your hot drinks served cool, were discovered to be reasonable. European food would have warmed him temporarily, but it would not have given him any power of resistance, whereas twenty minutes after eating frozen fish he felt its heat radiating through his body. The advantage of eating frozen meat, with its higher vitamin content, was that you could eat huge quantities of it. "Even the taste for rotted food came in time." Illness, the great fear of travel, was unknown to him. As for the character of the Eskimos, their "thieving" was simply the fact that they held goods in common. And everything else could be explained by their child-like natures. A whole race seems in many respects to have stopped at the point of a child's development. Like children, they want what they want when they want it. The desire ceasing, they forget. Outside the bare necessities—things like coal-oil, tea, tobacco, rice, flour and clothing—nothing has an intrinsic value; it only has value when they want it. So a fine dog collar will be swapped for a clay pipe, a needle for a whole fox. In action they have the tolerance of children and are as liable to distraction. A journey will stop because of one man's whim to sit down, go fishing or pick up a stick, and so on. The impulse is everything. It is almost sacred. If a man had done no trapping in the season and was therefore poor and without food, no one blamed him; the impulse *not* to keep himself was as sacred as the impulse to do so.

In a sense, of course, the Eskimos were wizened automatons created by an appalling climate. The habit of taking your aged father or mother out on to the ice at night and leaving them to die there, because they had become a burden, springs from a macabre logic, a terrible determinism. The frequent exchange of wives is regulated by a proper regard for convention and manners, but appears to be an attempt to break the monotony of a life which offers nothing whatever but the struggle for self-preservation. Murder, when it occurs, appears to be without malice or remorse. The struggle for life is stamped on these people, so that they are intensively alive only in the excitement of the blizzard when the instinct of self-preservation is at its peak. The one ideal of conduct which seems to govern them is summed up in their phrase "to be a man pre-eminently."

The book has a variety of scene, incident and character, and it is especially interesting on its subjective side. If the Vicomte had not the rather appalling humility or equally appalling efficiency of the great travellers, he was one of those who struggle conscientiously with their own characters. The most curious persons he met were not the Eskimos, I think, but the isolated Catholic missionaries. The first pair were found in dungarees unloading coal; the last one was a hermit who lived on Pelly Bay in a hole dug in the frozen earth, a hole not much more than four or five feet square. There was a couch in the room, a shelf or two, sacks, tubs, but almost none of the implements of civilisation. By origin he was a Norman peasant. He had lived for six years in this hole eating only frozen fish, which was often so hard that he had to thaw it with his breath before he could get his teeth in it. Nothing, of course, would persuade him that this was not the perfect life and it was a life of discarding. One thing after another was dropped because "it didn't make sense in these conditions"; but he was not reduced to an animal state. His mind, childishly simple though it was, was of the mystical cast and he lived in the world of his prayers. The picture of such extreme masochism is painful and alarming. He knew perfectly well that he made no real converts, though no doubt he himself might become a legend of value to the people. And that brings us to the one defect of the Vicomte's book; its lack of information about the religious life of the Eskimo. There is, indeed, little to record; but Peter Freuchen did describe bouts of seasonal frenzy, wild dancings in the igloo and trances which had something of primitive religion in them. Had gods, devils and legends been frozen out of the human imagination?

V. S. PRITCHETT

DOCUMENTS IN THE CASE

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face of innocent distress the child's hands clasp an improvised doll: an air-raid casualty of 1940. Such is the prologue. Turn a few more pages and the Nancy Cunard of 1929 is discovered supporting her fatal head on two feet of African bangles, Miss Edith Sitwell sits up in bed, pretending to be Pope, and Lady Alexander glitters with her famous courage (to this day undimmed).

Looking through the first twenty pages or so of this book is a strangely disturbing experience. Here is a cross-section of the last *monde* likely to deserve the epithet *beau* for many a day. As Mr. Quennell says: "It is as though in a dream we should have passed through the doors and shutters of some building, now for ever locked and abandoned, and found our friends still sitting there and still conversing, and caught a glimpse of ourselves even under a distant archway." But Mr. Quennell's commentary is altogether too good to be plundered like this: it demands to be read in full. He, like Mr. Beaton, is not out to moralise: these photographs are their own criticism, and Mr. Quennell is too intelligent an historian to reproach Society for being what it was. The Twenties were a poetical period, in the sense in which Matthew Arnold complained that his own was not. It produced little first-rate poetry, but it *lived poetically*, which is saying a lot. By any standard immoral, that society possessed some virtues to which for a long time to come no one, probably, will care to do justice. Its refusal to take politics seriously, its pathological irresponsibility (for which the war was largely to blame) were its gravest faults, from an historical point of view; but it possessed a reckless courage, an acute sense of fantasy, and an intellectual generosity which make it hypocritical of anyone who was young and reasonably well-off in those years to pretend that they were not the best of the last forty in which to be alive. Fun is fun; and those who made hay in the sunshine of the Twenties are likely to regret it less and less as times become grimmer and grimmer. The spirit of the Twenties was unquestionably inferior, as far as England is concerned, to that of 1940–41, but oh! how much superior to that of the Thirties—those disgraceful Thirties, with their political and artistic barbarities, their sulky violence and poker faces and pusillanimity.

If anyone could teach the camera how to lie, it would be Mr. Beaton during his years of apprenticeship to what is now a genuine art; for the social history which makes this book so important a document also shows the photographer purifying his taste all along the line—except, I think, in those chichi pictures of débutantes, posed amid blossoms and bird-cages, as in a shop window, which harp all too insistently on the vulgar note of embellishment struck, so long ago, by Lally Charles. But Mr. Beaton is a serious, as well as a clever, man: his photographs of artists and writers, and Cabinet Ministers especially, betray an extraordinary eye for what is characteristically significant in small details. The three phases of the Prime Minister show him as the public sees him, as his colleagues see him, and as Goebbels sees him; Mr. Eden appears as his Oxford friends remember him; Mr. H. G. Wells has had no time to put off that look of good-humoured exasperation; Lord Halifax in a window, Sir John Simon rising from a table, Lord Ironside lighting a pipe, all reveal their characters. And these are all "straight" photographs: the lighting is natural, the surroundings those of life.

Aside from this, the quotidian business of the photographer, I like Mr. Beaton less when he is attempting to compose a still life than when his painter's eye has snatched a piece of pure lyrical beauty from some fleeting gesture or attitude, some forgotten corner, some odd figure passing across the lens between London and Timbuctoo. The sinister and the strange are here caught in the act; a little boy awakes from sleep in the hay and rubs his eyes with a movement that is incredibly touching; Miss Vivien Leigh is revealed through the tear in a piece of paper; Jean Cocteau flies past a broken pane of a huge, smoke-blackened window.

But it is not perhaps until we reach the ruins of London that Mr. Beaton displays his most formidable qualities. If dirt is matter in the wrong place, these terrible visions of wrecked interiors exhibit, as no romantic composition has ever been able to do, the temporary triumph of evil and degradation. The fantastic, the gay, the silly music has stopped all at once, leaving the drummer of the Café de Paris to his sinister, half-conscious tapping in the darkness of confusion and death; spires of City churches loom ghostly through a smoking archway (a most impressive shot, this); and from the ruins of our world we are left gazing up at the faces of the British bomber pilots, set in a kind of watchful dream.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE COUNTRY

The English Scene. Edited by F. A. WALBANK. *Batsford.* 12s. 6d.

The publishers who have led us by the hand through so many turnstiles across so many drawbridges, who have persuaded us into so many cathedrals and who have guided us down so many neat and pretty village streets where no stone has been left unturned to preserve a genuine antiquity, from market hall to posting inn, now lead us through selected pages of the classics from seventeen hundred to the present day. The theme is England and the changes that have beset it. Mr. Walbank has been very fair, he has shown both squalor and rural ease. He has given us the obstinate breathtaking common sense of Cobbett as well as the persuasive sophistication of Horace Walpole; Mr. Priestley's bluff censure as well as Miss Mitford's sweetness; the fruitiness of *Humphrey Clinker* as well as the sombre realism of *Alton Lock.* And he has prefaced each section (The Manor, The Village, The Landscape, etc.) with an informed commentary on its history and its significance in English life. But in spite of this apparent impartiality the vision that he gives us of England is too cosy and so it seems false.

In normal times one would perhaps not consider this book except as an anthology of prose about England. As such it is adequate but not exciting. It enjoys that blank familiarity which one associates especially with insulated passages from great novels—and the common theme gives them an undeserved air of triteness. But the fate of the English countryside is such an argent, absorbing subject to-day that any book that touches on it, however faintly, becomes a serious document. Mr. Walbank approaches social history with knowledge rather than imagination and with optimism rather than subtlety, in his preface to The Village, for instance, he says:

> Whether hand-plough or tractor turn it, their interests belong to the soil. The aim of the following selection is to make articulate the Englishman's notion of a way of life which is inviolable and fundamental to his race. . . . It is through the moulding of tradition to modern needs that the village will endure, absorbing the new and adapting the ageless features to the appearance of change.

This is the sweet and comfortable hope that comes to one after talking to an ancient villager who has told one where the chaffinch nests, what the clouds portend, what ground raises the proudest wheat and why cabbages are club-rooted. All this nostalgic lore is to be found in that admirably reasoned book *Change in the Village* by George Bourne (he ought certainly to have been a contributor to this anthology), but compare his conclusions:

> There comes too often to my memory a touch of sordidness, if not in one connection then in another, so that I suspect myself, not for the first time, of sentimentality. Was the social atmosphere after all anything but a creation of my own dreams? Was the village life really idyllic? . . . The direct light has gone out of the people's life—the light, the meaning, the guidance. They have no longer a civilisation, but only some derelict habits left over from that which has gone. And it is no wonder if some of these habits seem now stupid, ignorant, objectionable; for the fitness has departed from them, and left them naked. They were acquired under a different set of circumstances.

That was written in 1912. How much more sadly and emphatically might he have written in 1939 of the fate of the cottager.

The last year has done much to accelerate the decay of already decaying grandeur, much to simplify over-elaborate prosperity and much to accentuate those anomalies and contrasts that make a new pleasure in the landscape. Haycocks set off the burnished grey of a Vanbrugh palace, sheep detach themselves from pillared walks, geese clatter on lawns, soldiers confuse stables where *Bucephelus*, *Starbright*, *Intrepid* and *Daphne* written up, still claim each stall for its long dead owner. Weeds dishevel paths to hot-houses where tomatoes crowd the peaches and figs. More unpleasant and less picturesque processes have been arrested; red roofs, for the moment, no longer creep over hills, cars no longer crowd by-roads, roundabouts no longer appear pointlessly at unfrequented forks. Best of all, we are slowly but undoubtedly turning into a nation of Cobbetts; we shout against the lunacy of agricultural committees who cannot see that it is village prosperity that matters; we glow with pride at the sight of unfamiliar fields of wheat; geese, chickens, ducks and pigs are a delight—and what a pleasure it is to see from a train great fields of vegetables in long, well-grown, hoed rows. Even the most obtuse are beginning to realise that there is more to the English scene than clipped yews and Eleanor crosses, that it will take more than societies for the protection of ancient monuments to preserve it and more than an abstract appreciation of rural life to induce people to go on living it and to make what George Bourne would call a new civilisation in which it can flourish.

MYFANWY PIPER

CHINESE TALES

Glue and Lacquer. Four Cautionary Tales translated from the Chinese by HAROLD ACTON and LEE YI-HSIEH. Preface by ARTHUR WALEY. Illustrations by ERIC GILL. *Golden Cockerel Press.* *2 guineas.*

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a lime-pit. The story takes wilder turns involving another nunnery, the unfortunate young man's relatives, a lost monk and his preceptor, and a magistrate's court.

A rake reaped posthumous notoriety
And naughty nuns a swift calamity.

They gave their heads. This story is charmingly related, with humour and the poetic ceremony never for long absent from Chinese writing. Wantonness could not be suggested in prettier phrases.

Of the other stories, one is of a young girl on board her parents' junk who conceals a lover in her room and feigns an illness requiring to be fed with innumerable bowls of rice. This is the most touching, the most "romantic" piece in the book, and the lover's gargantuan appetite supplies lively touches. The two remaining stories provide examples of feminine constancy in which virtue is made to shine almost as appealingly as vice. All four, from a popular collection called *Common Tales to Rouse the World* and published towards the end of the Ming dynasty, have the qualities of gracious and subtle story-telling. They are, as Dr. Waley insists in his preface, superior in every way to similar stories in the *Decameron.* He draws attention to the fact that in China (China before the revolution) there are two kinds of story, those written in literary language and those in the speech of everyday life. "The former very often deal with the supernatural; the latter are generally love-stories." the book from which these stories are taken is rare in China and rarer still in Europe, where only two copies exist, one being at the British Museum. *Glue and Lacquer* will prove an agreeable though not very important discovery to English readers.

G. W. STONIER

Week-end Competitions

No. 605

Set by Doll Tearsheet

Competitors are invited to describe the experience before the war that they look back to with most pleasure, and also the experience after the war they look forward to with most eagerness. Entries not to exceed 16 lines of verse or 150 words of prose.

RULES—Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, Sept. 15th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 602

Set by V. S. Pritchett

The usual prizes are offered for a letter of explanation by an author to an acquaintance who has supposed himself to be the original of one of the author's characters. Contributors are invited to send such an explanation on any one of the following: Miss Austen to Mr. Collins; Shakespeare to Mr. W. H.; Dickens to Micawber; Molière to Tartuffe; Stevenson to Mr. Hyde; Wilde to Lady Bracknell; Shaw to Mrs. Warren; Proust to Charlus.

Report by V. S. Pritchett

This common complaint of course gives novelists the chance of their lives: "How could a man or woman of your well-known sense and virtue be so foolish as to identify yourself with a character who is ridiculous or vicious? Obviously there can be no resemblance." Almost all competitors took this line. Whether novelists do, in fact, take the opportunity, I rather doubt. To wriggle, to lie, to invent other origins and so on, are, I think, commoner, chiefly because novelists are not as tough, honest and highly-polished as the entrants in this competition, but are easily rattled and bewildered.

Far and away the most popular victim was Jane Austen's Mr. Collins. He was caught out in all directions. First on the conventional "How-could-you?" line; then for revealing that he read novels. One clever competitor, Miss Barbara Fletcher, achieves a note of devastating flirtation: "Correspondence between a single gentleman and a lady is so significant an act that I feel guilty indeed if any indiscretion on my part should have hurried you into conduct scarcely delicate in a gentleman, and certainly unbecoming in a clergyman." Wm. Bliss makes a wicked appeal to Mr. Collins' snobbery. A good many, like Miss P. Edgar, with astute humility, played up "the uninformed and unlearned female" and other neat hits were by Pibwob, Iris, E. Aitken, and J. E. Gunning.

Mr. Micawber, Tartuffe, Mr. Hyde and Proust and Mr. W. H. were poorly treated in comparison. Mrs. Warren did better. The Shavian postcard abounded. There was Hamilton Price's sinister postscript "Of course I remember where we met." E. W. Fordham pointed out to another would-be Mrs. Warren that her impeccable morals would make her a failure in Mrs. Warren's profession. There was a sharp retort courteous to Mr. W. H. from Veronica Sibthorpe which in a less crowded and competitive competition than this one, would have had the prize for wit. "Sir," it runs briefly, "Shall I compare *thee* to a summer's day?" The Prousts were terrifying. They all admitted the crime and one saw how grateful the French judiciary should be that the author of Swann never got into the dock and conducted his own case. Rebe Taylor made a pretty good mountain out of a Proustian molehill, but E. D. surpassed her in the diabolical malice of her opening sentence. I was much taken by Even John's Tartuffe and by the originality of Richard Pomfret's Mr. Collins. His third paragraph is magnificent. His seems to me the best sustained effort and he has the first prize. E. D. has the second for a Proust which might have had the first if it had not sagged in the middle after its wicked opening. I am humbled by the braininess of this paper's readers.

FIRST PRIZE

Miss Austen to the Reverend Mr. Buncer.

Miss Austen desires to convey her felicitations to Mr. Buncer on his *unusual* penetration in discovering in himself the original of her character, the Reverend Mr. Collins, who plays so considerable a part in her novel, *Pride and Prejudice.*

As Mr. Buncer truly remarks, nothing is more flattering than to find that one's capabilities and proclivities have been observed and enshrined in prose for the edification of others who have not been so fortunately placed in an acquaintance with those who till the field of letters.

Miss Austen notes the wish expressed by Mr. Buncer that he should appear in some future novel after he has attained the honour of elevation to the Episcopal Bench, in which situation his natural qualities will have been enabled to evince themselves to still greater advantage in surroundings more in keeping with true gentility. She will endeavour to comply with this wish, and assures Mr. Buncer that she will spare no pains to present him to her readers in his true light.

Miss Austen closes with expressions of gratitude to one who, however *unwittingly,* has rendered such great service to her in the labour of composition.

SECOND PRIZE.

Marcel Proust au Baron de Charlus.

. . . L'écrivain agit, en quelque sorte, à la façon d'une savante cuisinière qui, transfigurant par son art subtil une volaille de basse-cour en "Poulet Strogoff," crée, par celà même, à cet oiseau une personnalité nouvelle et à tel point assimilable que l'on en oublie son caractère purement ornithologique pour ne retenir de sa transformation que l'idée seule du "poulet," désormais remplaçant en notre esprit le volatile primitif. Il en est ainsi, dans la meilleure littérature, des personnages moins imités de la realité que reconstruits dans une identité neuve qui, si elle se signale par des détails considerés comme typiques, ne les offre qu'en témoignage synthetisé et animé d'un dynamisme émanant, à travers sa cérébration particulière, de l'âme même de l'auteur. Telle manière de brosser la moustache, de piquer une épingle de cravate, de tendre les doigts pour une poignée de main, choses auxquelles les amis n'attachent d'importance que lorsqu'ils les retrouvent dans les pages d'un livre, deviennent les symboles d'une personnalité impregnée d'une existence réelle que la vie ne lui donnait pas.

Et c'est ce désir de vous faire vivre d'une immortelle realité, par amour pour vous—amour de père, ou même, si, j'ose dire, de tante—qui me poussa à user de vos caractéristiques personnelles—artificielles, puisqu'à peine plus remarquées par votre entourage que le plumage et les gloussements d'un gallinacé quelconque,—pour ériger un Baron de Charlus à jamais reconnaissable et fixé dans sa forme unique, métabolisée et éternelle. . . .

E. D.

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By URBANUS

HOME RAILWAY CONTROVERSY

THE Stock Exchange appears to be in two minds about the new railway agreement, but on balance the bulls are prevailing and the stocks are slightly higher. The bears have made the following points. First, the annual rental of £43 millions may give the companies more than they received in net revenues in 1940, but it is impossible to assess the war damage liability. The official statement was obscure: it said that "from the commencement of control" the railways would be dealt with under the Government scheme for public utility undertakings. Did that mean from the beginning of the war or from the beginning of the new rental agreement? Under the utility scheme the railways will have to bear half the war damage and if this half were to exceed £12 millions it would begin to eat into equity dividends. Secondly, the bears argue that the post-war uncertainty remains as dark as ever and that it is impossible to value the political risks involved. Now investors must be careful to distinguish between facts and the bearish propaganda put out by the railway companies themselves to justify a highly favourable agreement. The truth is that the new agreement makes them better off not only than they were before the war but better off than they were in 1940. The war damage liability is a useful bogy for their propaganda purposes. Actually, war damage liability need not be charged to revenue account at all, but to capital account. The more that is charged to capital account the better for the railways in negotiating their capital compensation in any post-war nationalisation scheme. I agree that the political risk remains as dark as ever. A radical, popular Government would be much harsher to the railways than the "big business" Trade Union Coalition which we enjoy to-day. But the railway executives are well aware of this and that is why the rental figure of £43 millions a year acquires particular significance. I will quote my friend "Lex" of the *Financial News* on this point: "It can hardly be doubted," he says, "that the Treasury, which loves a precedent, will seize upon these terms as at least the starting point for any nationalisation negotiation—it is known that the railways have had this fact in mind during the recent discussions." The railway chairmen have frankly assured their stockholders that they will not be worse off under the new agreement than they were before.

* * *

To come down to details, the £43 millions are divided between the companies as follows:

	New Rental	Pool Payment 1940
L.M.S.	£14,736,000	£14,423,000
L.N.E.	10,148,000	9,864,000
G.W.	6,669,000	6,588,000
Southern ..	6,607,000	6,610,000
L.P.T.B. ..	4,840,000	4,812,000

To the £43 millions must be added the ancillary receipts (as before) and interest on capital raised after 1937. This is important for Southern which has raised about £11 millions since 1937. Every railway is, therefore, better off than in 1940. Indeed, the new Agreement will enable G.W. to maintain its dividend at 4 per cent., L.M.S. to pay 2 per cent. on its ordinary, Southern 2 per cent. on its deferred and L.N.E. 2½ per cent. on its second preference, which are all in excess of the average distribution in the 1937–39 period. For the speculative investor the preference stocks which rank ahead of these marginal stocks are still holding out possibilities in the home railway market. For example:

	Price Year Ago	To-day's Price	Yield %
L.M.S. 4% pref. ..	47	65	6.2
L.M.S. 4% (1923) pref.	36	51½	7.7
L.N.E. 4% 1st pref.	33	51	7.8
Southern 5% pref. ord.	46	64	8.0

All these dividends are, of course, non-cumulative. The wise speculator will now begin to take profits. The cautious investor should keep to the stocks with a cumulative dividend, for example:

	Price	Yield
L.M.S. 4% G'teed ..	94	4.3
L.N.E. 4% 1st G'teed	85½	4.7
L.N.E. 4% 2nd G'teed	74	5.4

* * *

Dealers were caught short of San Paulo Government Loan 7 per cent. bonds which jumped nine points this week on the news that the Brazilian Government had set aside funds for redeeming (by monthly tender) substantial portions of this loan of which about £6 millions are outstanding in London. At the present market price of 76 the flat yield on the basis of 50 per cent. of the interest payments is just over 4½ per cent. This will cause a scramble among speculative investors for depreciated South American bonds. In fact, the word went out some time ago that the best gamble on the Stock Exchange was not equity shares but the "worthless" bonds of Mexico and the defaulting South American States. It is common knowledge that the war should improve the trade and foreign exchange position of the Latin American republics, particularly that of Brazil. Two Brazilian railway companies, for example, have been able recently to remit funds required for the payment of dividends and interest. Brazilian Traction at 10 seems likely to resume its old position of the best gamble stock in the foreign market.

Company Meetings

BEECHAMS PILLS LIMITED

Considerable Expansion

THE annual general meeting of Beechams Pills, Ltd., was held on August 28th in London.

Mr. Philip E. Hill (the chairman) said: For the ninth successive year our trading profits show an increase. The profit for the year amounts to £1,085,893, which is comparable with £1,055,615 for the preceding year. This figure is arrived at after providing in the accounts of two of the subsidiary companies £97,758 for the redemption of redeemable preference shares (you will appreciate that this cost the Company, including tax, some £195,000). In addition, we have increased our reserves and carry forwards in the accounts of subsidiary companies. Moreover, we have not raised our selling prices since the outbreak of war, although our costs of production and overheads during the year under review have increased by nearly £350,000, as compared with 1939, so I am sure you will agree that when all these things are taken into consideration we have every reason to be satisfied with the results achieved.

The Company's normal trade, both at home and overseas, without accounting for Government contracts, shows considerable expansion. Our export trade has, of course, been handicapped by war conditions, although we are exceedingly fortunate that the development of this part of our business lies within the Empire and North and South America.

Our contribution to the National Exchequer for the year is estimated to amount to over £1,000,000. The Pharmacy and Medicines Act, 1941, will abolish the medicine stamp duty as and from September 2nd next, which in our case amounted last year to £166,000. The new Act should improve the status of proprietary articles and patent medicines. The full benefit of the savings effected as a result of this Act will be given to the public, but it is necessary to issue a word of warning and that is—if costs of production continue to increase we shall ultimately be bound to raise selling prices.

The report was unanimously adopted.

TELEPHONE RENTALS, LIMITED

INCREASED PROFITS

IMPORTANCE OF COMPANY'S SERVICES

The annual general meeting of Telephone Rentals, Ltd., was held on Thursday in London.

Mr. Fred. T. Jackson (Chairman and Managing Director) said that dividends from subsidiary companies declared during the year amounted to £136,268 as compared with £130,334 for the preceding year. Dividends on sundry investments and interest receivable amounted to £8,904, or rather more than twice the corresponding figure for the previous years. The net profit, £136,312, showed an increase of £8,945 over last year's figure. The charge for income tax showed a substantial increase, and the general reserve had been raised to £225,000 by the transfer of a further £25,000. An interim dividend of 4 per cent. had already been paid, and the directors now recommended a final dividend of 6 per cent., less income tax.

The Operating Companies were very busily engaged. Before the war the provision of quick communication was highly important. During the war tele-communication was absolutely indispensable. The shortage of workers made its use imperative for the speeding up of output, for the services the companies installed not only provided the quick inter-communication necessary between factory departments, but also enabled the principal executives in the administration to contact within almost a few seconds other executives in whatever part of the factory they might happen to be. He was not making any exaggerated claim as to the vital necessity of the various services they provided, as they had ample written evidence from subscribers that the companies' installations were of vital importance.

They had had considerable difficulties arising through the shortage of labour and the shortage of materials, but the position now was much more satisfactory, and he was able to assure shareholders that they would be able to secure supplies of the most important apparatus they used and retain the necessary skilled labour to maintain the very large number of instruments which had been installed.

The Operating Companies had not only been successful in maintaining their position, but in adding a considerable number of new subscribers.

As to the current year, they had various difficulties to face, particularly in connection with increased cost of materials and rising wages. In addition, they had had to carry the cost of war damage insurance of installations they had installed on subscribers' premises and commodity insurance of the very considerable stocks they had accumulated. They had therefore approached their subscribers asking them to agree to a small increase in the annual rents they were paying, and the majority had agreed. Demand for the companies' installations continued on a most satisfactory scale and was certainly proof of the good service they had been able to render to those firms who had been subscribers for many years past. He saw no reason, judging from the experience they had had up to the present time, for not being able to forecast a successful 1941.

In conclusion, the Chairman paid a tribute to all in the organisation for the hard work and the cheerful manner in which they had performed it during the period under review. No firm in this country had a more loyal and enthusiastic personnel than this company.

The report was unanimously adopted.

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS

W.E.A., West London Branch. Class in "Economic Problems of Peace and War." Tutor, BARBARA WOOTTON. 24 meetings beginning 6.30 p.m., Thurs., Sept. 11th, at Fulham Central Library, 598 Fulham Road, S.W.6. Fee for course, 5*s.* Further particulars, HON. SEC., 39 Compton Road, S.W.19.

EXHIBITIONS

SOVIET LIFE EXHIBITION, 6½ Suffolk Street, W.1. Chamber Concert (first performance Shostakovich Quintet), Sat., Sept. 6th, 5.30. Exhibition extended to Sept. 13th, 11-blackout. Details from S.C.R., 98 Gower Street, W.C.1 (EUS. 2315), or Gallery (WHI 2828).

WORK of Islington Artists, September 8th to 19th, 2-7 p.m. daily except Sundays. Opening by C. R. W. Nevinson September 8th, 7 p.m. CENTRAL LIBRARY, Holloway Road, Islington.

P.E.N. Congress, French Institute, Queensberry Place, S.W.7. Desmond MacCarthy will open the International Book Exhibition on September 10th, at 5.30 p.m. There will be a poetry reading by Edith Evans on Friday, September 12th, at 5.30 p.m. Admission, 1*s.*

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL

SHOREHAM GRAMMAR SCHOOL, Milland House, Liphook, Hants. Recognised Board of Education. Boys prepared Universities, professions, business. Excellent exam. results. Playing-fields, squash, tennis, swimming, cadets and cubs. Particular care given to food and health. Moderate fees.

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KIDSTONES Co-educational School, Bishopdale, Leyburn, Yorks, situated in a quiet Yorkshire Dale; large productive garden; happy, self-dependent children; Academic subjects, Art and Music taught by qualified staff; moderate fees; all ages.

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HURTWOOD SCHOOL, Peaslake, Nr. Guildford (Tel.: Abinger 119). Vacancies for boarders. Safe district. Constructive outlook. Particulars from Principal: JANET JEWSON, M.A., N.F.U.

DANE COURT, WHATCOMBE, nr. BLANDFORD. PREP. SCHOOL for BOYS—evacuated from Surrey. Six miles from anywhere in heart of Dorset. Modern ideas. Good food. No prep. Sensible discipline. Reasonable fees.

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BUNCE Court School, at Trench Hall, Wem, Salop. Co-educational, 5-17. Recognised Bd. of Ed. Qualified academic gardening, domestic science staff. Principal: A. ESSINGER, M.A.

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PROGRESSIVE Home-school, Wye Valley. Young couple, educ. modern schl., offer individual care children (7-12), £5 mnth. YOUNG, B.A., Hollyside, Brockweir, Nr. Chepstow.

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APPOINTMENTS VACANT & WANTED

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Vacancies exist for men graduates aged 32-50 with substantial qualifications in Mathematics or Geography. It is not desired that men over the age of 35, who are already engaged in full-time teaching service, or men below that age whose calling up under the National Service (Armed Forces) Acts has been deferred to enable them to continue in full-time teaching service, should apply for these vacancies. Candidates appointed will be given commissions in the R.A.F.V.R. and will wear uniform. They will, however, be on civilian conditions of service. Those whose names are not included on the Central Register, Ministry of Labour and National Service, should apply on a POSTCARD for particulars to:—The Under-Secretary of State, Air Ministry (E.S.1), Dept. Q.J., London. Those whose names are on the Central Register should apply through the Central Register (Section G), 41 Tothill Street, London, S.W.1.

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The Union invite applications for the office of Deputy General Secretary (male). Candidates must be well educated and possess administrative, organising and negotiating abilities. Possession of a University degree a recommendation but not essential. Twelve months' training in the duties will be given. Post is permanent and pensionable. Salary scale, per annum, £400-£15-£550; starting pay £400-£475, according to age and qualifications. War bonus in addition.

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LANCASHIRE COUNTY LIBRARY

Applications are invited for the post of Temporary Branch Librarian at the Litherland County Branch Library for the duration of the war. Candidates must have passed the Intermediate Examination of the Library Association, or must hold the Certificate for the Diploma of the School of Librarianship. Salary £200-£15-£275. The successful candidate will be required to pass a medical examination and to contribute to the County Council's Superannuation Scheme. Applications, together with copies of three testimonials, should reach the Director of Education, County Library, County Offices, Preston, not later than Saturday, September 13th.

ORGANISER and Secretarial Assistant, man, required for W.E.A. service in North Western District. Salary £300 a year. Appointment in first place for one year. Applicants must not be liable for military service, and should have experience of the W.E.A. For form of application send stamped addressed envelope to W.E.A. OFFICE, c/o Extra-Mural Dept., University Manchester, 13. Closing date September 16th, 1941.

MARKET Gardener wanted (either sex), experience not essential. Knowledge of water culture or engineering advantageous. N. Wales. Box 5.

OSTEOPATH and Nature Cure practitioner who takes a few residential patients requires someone to do all the domestic work in the house and help with the preparation of the food. Somebody who can be treated as a social equal. No uniform. Own bed-sittingroom. No confinement to kitchen regions. Wages 35*s.* weekly. All modern conveniences. No mistress-maid attitude. Miss BEATRICE HARRIS, 16 Springfield Road, Leicester. Telephone 77913.

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CAPABLE woman wanted as personal assistant to owner-manager of London retail business. Experience not essential, but applicant must be keen, adaptable and conscientious. Write, stating age and full details of career. Box 11.

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APPOINTMENTS—continued

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YOUNG lady, knowledge Food Reform, gardening—help children wanted. "Merrileas." Gerrards Cross 2623.

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WANTED. Housemaid, British or foreign. Elderly woman suitable. Country. Write MRS. POOLE, Red House, Guilsfield, Welshpool, Mont.

WANTED. Nursery governess for 2 girls, 7 and 4½. British or foreign. Country. Write MRS. POOLE, Red House, Guilsfield, Welshpool, Mont.

SOCIAL research workers wanted; live, versatile, scientifically-minded, mobile; more kicks than ha'pence, but interesting work; preference to those who have *done* something; those fleeing from Bevin discouraged. Box 13.

EAST END Social Service Committee requires shorthand typist, interested in personal problems. Possibilities of training. Box 18.

WAR job wanted by City executive, 44, educated, presentable, travelled, who combines wide commercial experience (sales, secretarial, staff control, accounts) with an ear for choice English. Stylist at speeches, memoranda, etc. Keen critical judgment men, music, books might interest publisher. Would lecture congenially briefed. In view of subsidy salary minor importance. Suggestions to Box 31.

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